

# PUNCH

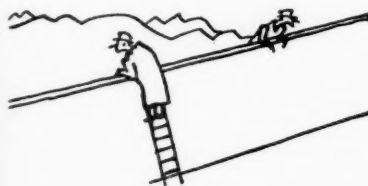


## CHARIVARIA

**I**N some quarters the apathy of the Malayans towards their independence celebrations is put down to the fact that a lot of them haven't any idea what independence really means. Others think it's because they imagine it means running their country on the lines of Ghana.

### You Likee Visa?

FIRST the Americans announce that they will allow twenty-four reporters to go to China; then the Chinese decline to admit them; and then, before the ink is dry on the telegram, the Americans reiterate *their* decision not to admit any



Chinese journalists into the United States. So now the reporters of both nations are once more free to write what they think fit about one another without all this tedious travelling.

### Tortoise a Lesson

MISS MARY GUY, who said of the hundred pounds she was left for the upkeep of her late mistress's pet tortoise Tilly "It will keep Tilly for the rest of her life," either has unduly optimistic ideas about inflation or unduly pessimistic ideas about the longevity of tortoises.

### Maltese Not Cross

It is "utter rubbish," says a statement from the Commissioner-General for Malta in London, to suggest that Lord Mountbatten has been concerning himself with politics in Malta; the real truth is that "the Mountbattens are

idolized by the vast majority of the Maltese population, especially by the humbler folk." The implication that anyone concerned with politics could never be idolized by the population is said to have caused a certain amount of ill-feeling among politicians in Britain.

### Rockets at Five Thousand Miles

"THE most difficult decision that faces any of us," said the Air Minister at the opening of the Chiefs of Air Staffs conference last week, "is the choice of weapons." What's more, in this unchivalrous age the choice is no longer left to the recipient of the challenge.

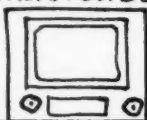
### Hide and Sikh

WE shall soon know whether Malik Firoz Khan Noon's charge that the whole of India has been turned into a Russian air base is true or not when we begin to hear reports that—for instance—the Mayor of Agra has asked for the Taj Mahal to be put out of bounds to Mongolian airmen because of complaints from the local girls.

### Where's Gilbert?

SOME of the new wireless and television sets at Earl's Court showed the beginning of an interesting new trend, which is to get away from the monotonous old-fashioned wording on the control panels. On the one hand there

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY  
BREAK GLASS



was the firm who have dispensed with VOLUME and substituted LOUDNESS; on the other there was the set with a vast knob in the centre of the panel labelled

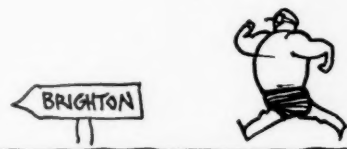
PRESENCE. A set with a knob marked ABSENCE was unhappily not on view.

### Rum Baa-baa

THE Northern Pastoral Club have registered a protest against what they consider to be the unjustifiable evacuation of livestock from the island of Rum. It would have been different in the case of Eigg, which is rumoured to have a lion on it.

### The English Eccentrics

LONDON to Brighton walkers, Lake District climbers, vintage car rally-drivers, round the Fastnet yachtsmen, and Channel swimmers, says Commander Gerald Forsberg (a Channel swimmer) in *The Times*, are "part of the contemporary English scene." We can



only wonder how it is that the British Travel Association has gone so long without putting them into one of its advertisements.

### Through the Viewing-glass

"ALICE in Wonderland TV" is what one of the newspapers has called a strange phenomenon in Staffordshire, where television pictures have been getting smaller and smaller until they disappear altogether. Lewis Carroll addicts will learn without surprise that the grin is the last thing to go.

### To a Filibusterer

YOUR arguments, sir? We had heard 'em Long ere your millionth word.

Now you reduce *ad absurdum*

A cause that before seemed absurd.

## Eyeless in Ghana

**B**LOW, bugles, blow, let all be right as rain.  
 Democracy has done the trick again,  
 And Freedom broadens down, as she is meant,  
 Once more from precedent to precedent,  
 And, though some joker on the *Telegraph*  
 Attempts to raise an ill-considered laugh,  
 Progressive thinkers bet their last banana  
 That clubs will turn up trumps again in Ghana.  
 Blow, bugles, blow and help us scotch the rumour  
 That there are any flies on old Nkrumah.  
 The Opposition think he should disclose  
 The measures that the Government propose  
 But then "You've got another think a-coming,"  
 Says Mr. Baako (elegantly thumbing  
 His nose, since nothing's really more suburban  
 Than pin-striped double-breasters with a turban).  
 Then someone threw the chair that he had sat  
 on,  
 And five policemen beat him with a baton.  
 Another, taking pot-luck from afar,  
 Landed a stone on someone else's car,

And then explained it didn't mean a thing;  
 He'd thought that it was Mr. Geoffrey Bing.  
 The Speaker, of a moderate ideology,  
 Accepted this most reasonable apology  
 And then, promising men must live and learn,  
 Thought that the House had better now adjourn.  
 Meeting again, they move a Bill of Urgency  
 To say there is a state now of Emergency,  
 Which gives the Government the full authority  
 To put in prison all of the minority.  
 Two wretched Moslem leaders, who had got  
 A whim Nkrumah was not quite so hot,  
 Find that the House has passed by acclamation  
 A statute for their instant deportation.  
 Whatever can self-government be for,  
 Nkrumah says, if I can't make the law?

Shall Freedom die? the sturdy patriots cried  
 How long can Freedom last? the mob replied.  
 It lasted, if meticulously reckoned,  
 At most about a quarter of a second.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

## The Unquiet Fleece

By GWYN THOMAS

**W**E all know the sort of feeling  
 aroused in Missouri by the  
 James Brothers, the conflicting  
 tides of anger at joints incontinently

cased and stripped, and of pity for the  
 everlasting renegade who is a useful  
 hook for the sense we all have of being  
 more or less drastically on the run.  
 The nearest you are likely to come to  
 that situation in Britain is with the  
 sheep of South Wales.

In judging these creatures you can  
 forget about the sheep you have come  
 across in other parts of the world.  
 These performers have developed in-  
 stincts and muscles which, alongside  
 Canterbury lambs, put them in the  
 timber-wolf class.

The feud between the sheep farmers  
 (who, in terms of social psychology as  
 applied to sheep straying, have still  
 eighty years to go before they catch up  
 with the Rebecca Riots) and the urban  
 authorities in the valleys has now  
 reached Kentucky level. The councillors  
 say they have the right to impound the  
 flocks that come roaming down the  
 slopes to add a new dimension of fuss  
 and intractable stupidity to the valley  
 villages. And now we have voters with  
 vans whose task it is to corner and corral  
 these animals. These workers have each

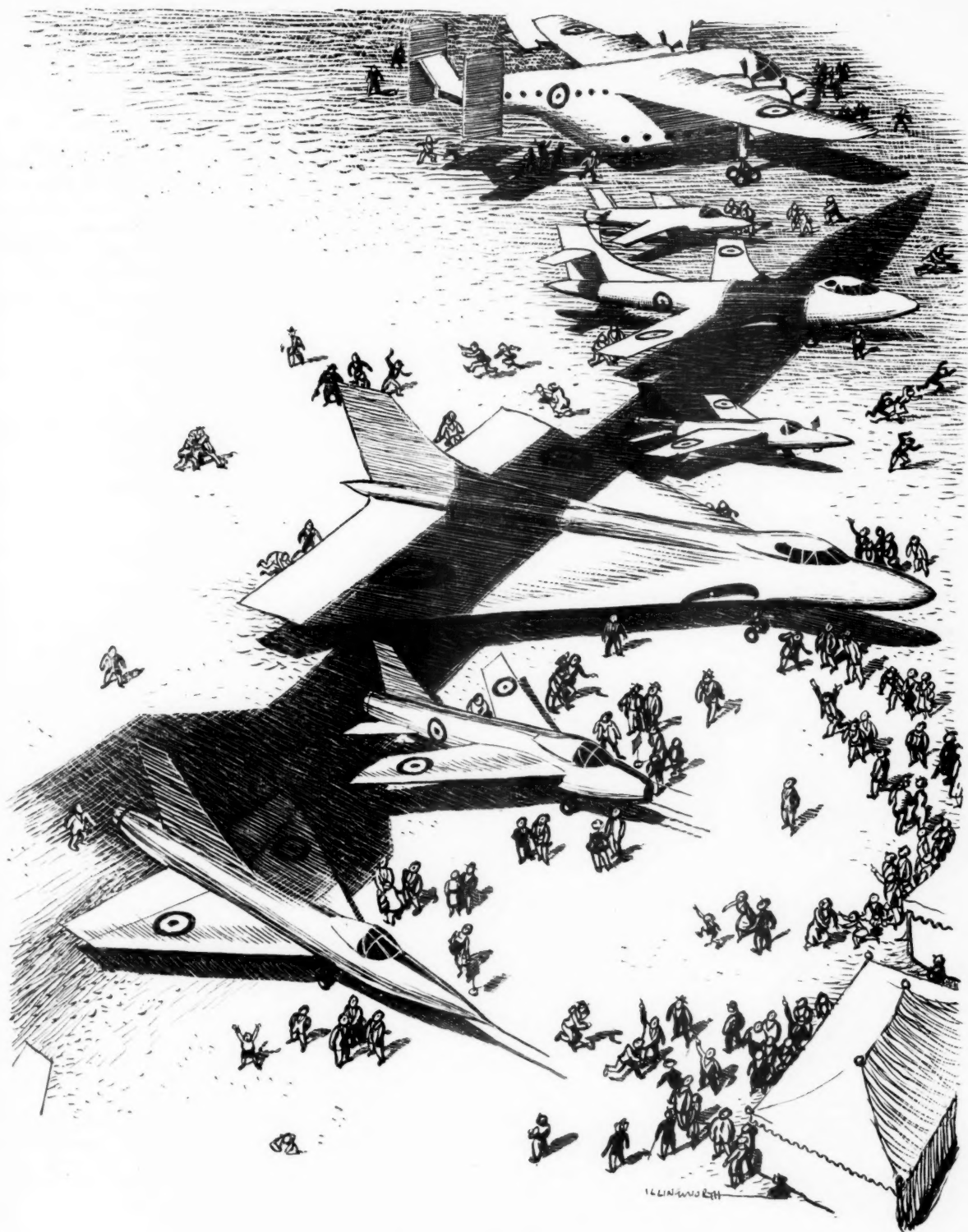
a thousand clownish defeats to their  
 credit. Imagine a single tipstaff un-  
 armed trying to halt the gallop of Dick  
 Turpin's Bess and you will see that they  
 earn their portion of the rate.

The angrier farmers, on the other  
 hand, claim that the councillors are no  
 better than a bunch of no-good rustlers,  
 haters of mutton as well as squander-  
 maniacs, and that they will come high-  
 tailing down and free their cattle by  
 force if there is any more of this  
 impounding nonsense. So it is only a  
 matter of time before the rattle of  
 squirrel guns breaks the moonlit silence  
 of the cwm and those councillors who  
 have not locked themselves in the  
 mayor's parlour will walk abroad with  
 protective wads of four-ply agenda  
 beneath their dark serge.

There is no doubt that the resilient  
 awareness and drive of these sheep  
 leaves many of the inhabitants far  
 behind. Not long ago I came out of a  
 café at the top of the Rhondda. I was  
 accompanied by a man whose respect  
 for the strength and sapience of our  
 sheep makes him the only man in



"The two and a half hours to New York  
 project will make those bus journeys to  
 London Airport look a bit silly."



FARNBOROUGH, 1957

Glamorgan who really understands the way they feel about the cow in India. A group of about twelve sheep had just come down from the hillside. Their coats had been torn by headlong trips through a dozen fences, discoloured by journeys up and down a score of tips. They have a tough hopefulness, these sheep; they nibble at the ghost of grass on tip sides as utterly barren as anything on this earth. Spectral food for spectral lives. This group stood in a rough semi-circle about twenty yards from the café. Only one or two had their eyes on the café from which, with patience, they knew they might expect a bounty of scrads. They knew, too,

that if they stood too close to the shop or stared in chorus the caterer would come to regard them as a kind of grey neurosis closing in on him and a hindrance to people wishing to come in and eat. So there they were, half showing the roguish and softly savage glint of dignity in degradation, knowing precisely the degree of pressure to exert on the humans now cluttering up the valley bed if they were to continue existence on the uncertain surfaces of the globe. "There's no doubt about it," said my friend. "These creatures have really graduated. When they find that the wool they wear is as inferior as the stuff we put on they'll demand the vote."



There was a period during which my father and I suffered from a joint and waxing insomnia. We would sit in the kitchen, the valley around us quite soundless. We would each have a volume of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* and we would read steadily, lifting our heads and exchanging a wink on every fiftieth page to show that our insomnia had never been better. At two in the morning, as grimly resolute as Loyola, the parade of the sheep down the High Street would begin. Outside each door was a loaded ash-bin. Down they would go as the marauding platoon worked its way towards the centre of the town. We could identify each bin by the timbre of the awaited clang. "That's Mrs. Morgan's." "There goes Mrs. Shanklyn's." "Hullo, that's Waldo Treharne's twice. Must have tamped." Sometimes one particular note would be missing, a crash of particular quality expected but not heard. My father, fussy to the point of mania about all things that happen by night, would often go out to make sure that the bin which had been missed was the one we had imagined. And if it were he would sometimes drive the sheep back, telling them to be consistent and to finish the job. He would then help them to tip our own bin which was heavy and made a noise that woke the dead if heaved over too clumsily.

Domestic gardens the sheep regarded as a kind of bonus. I have seen the leader of the troupe that did our locality for many years peep over a wall and stare at the produce of a particular garden. He wagged his head in a clearly negative way. A week later he looked in again. His yellow eyes lit up, he nodded his great head in a firm yes and waved on his troupe. They cleared the wall like a Grand National field and every last vegetable was lifted in a matter of minutes.

Year after year my father's garden was given this treatment, somewhere in late May. He wrote a poem for the Birchtown National Eisteddfod on the lines of Markham's "Man with the Hoe" but written with specific bitterness against sheep, beginning: "I damn thee, ram, progenitor of woe." In Welsh that added up to a fine invective mouthful.

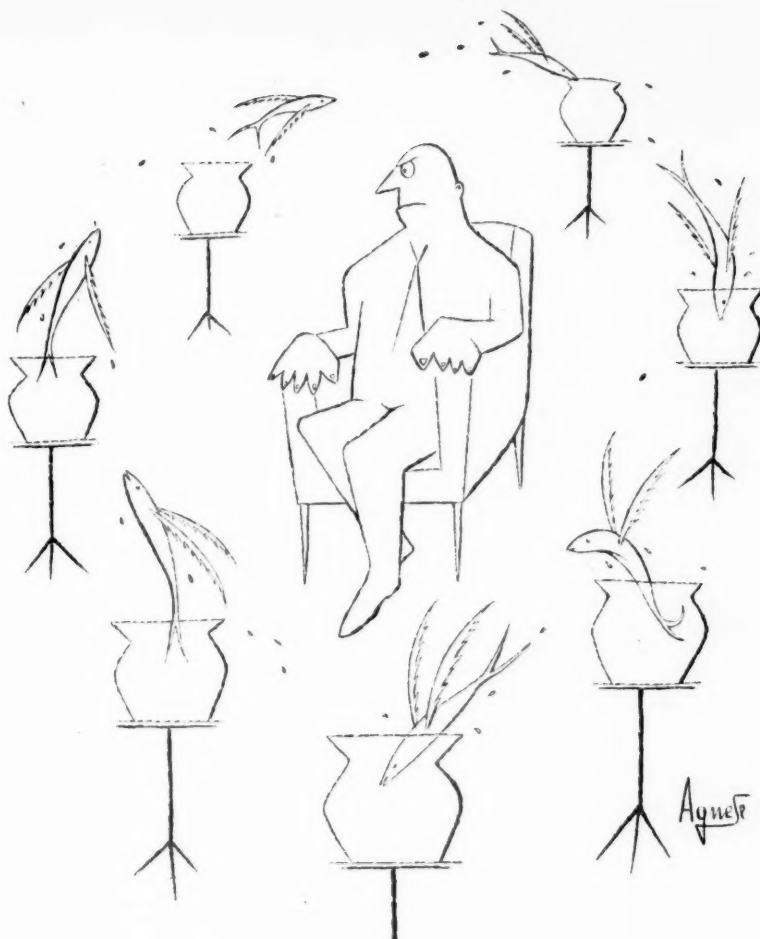
Later he was persuaded that the fence and gate at the top of the garden were too low to keep out invaders. He

built them up with a zeal and to a height that would have done credit to a neurasthenic French noble in 1788. He planted the garden and sang as he did it. He had the Sioux on the right side of the stockade. A lovely June brought each furrow to fat perfection. My father felt fulfilled and secure. He was planning another poem on the ultimate goodness of man and earth.

In the meantime we were keeping our eye on the sheep. They were patrolling the back lane behind the house and time and again we saw their leader, a most pensive ram whom we called Attila, pause and stare at the barricade my father had put up. Attila was working something out, and a sheep more conscious of trigonometry than Attila never lived. He knew that he had the legs to clear the new obstruction but lacked the run to give him impetus and lift. One night of full moon he found the answer. He and his friends pushed in the back door of the house across the back lane from us. They filed up the garden path, flexing their muscles and thanking Attila. They lined up for the run, Attila in the van. At that moment my father had gone to the top of the garden to admire the great blowsy beauty of the mountain under the moon, to savour the smell of lusty bean-shoots and rose bushes, to fit a last line of plangent exaltation to his ode, saying how in this moment of peace a pattern of loveliness was emerging from his immemorial scars. Then Attila, the biggest sheep in the zone, came hurtling out of the night and landed right on top of him. As soon as he got sorted out from Attila another sheep cleared the barrier and laid him flat.

The next day my father tore down the barricade. He sought out the troupe who were sleeping it off on a neighbouring hillock and he told Attila that there were still five or six shoots of this and that he had overlooked in the dark and that he was now free to go back and finish the job without half killing the tenant and putting paid to odes.

My father never submitted his poem. But later that year he won the prize for the best bitter epigram awarded by the Philosophy Class at the Library and Institute, a short, black statement equating Attila the sheep with some local politician of athletic turpitude.



### *A Fool in Sheep's Clothing is Soon Parted*

I DOTE on her mixed green metaphors,  
Her minced clichés, and her scrambled saws.  
For she's killing two birds of a feather, of course,  
When she says that the worst of us have our flaws.

A rolling stone, she is prone to muse,  
Is worth two in the bush, and (even stranger)  
If the shoe fits, then what can you lose?  
But don't put all your dogs in one manger.

"Where there's so much fire, there's always smoke,  
So why carry coals when Scotland is burning?"  
She asks, then adds as a master stroke  
That it's a long worm that has no turning.

Although a stitch in the side saves nine,  
It's never too late to say die, she warns.  
She may be casting her bread upon swine,  
But I think she's hitting the bull on the horns.

G. S. GALBRAITH



*"I don't know, really—I suppose because it's there."*

## How to be Famous

## As a Woman



smilby.

**T**HIS profession—some would call it a vocation, others a lost cause—is so notoriously difficult, and to achieve fame while practising it calls for such dedication and powers of endurance that only those who show unmistakable early signs of promise and utterly refuse to be dissuaded should be encouraged to go in for it at all. Competition is fierce, since in England rather more than every other person is more or less a woman, and the famous ones have to trample one another down and get to be very tough at the top. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that there is no room for weaklings, faint-hearts unwilling to start at the bottom, or those little feminine creatures who want to be good and let who will be clever. To be famous as a woman entails being cleverer than the next woman by a long chalk if you want to get away with being even slightly good; never be fooled by Queen Victoria.

## WHEN TO START

This cannot be too early. Yasmin Khan, Caroline Grimaldi and Chantal d'Orthez are all examples of famous women who began with the right attitude towards public relations. Career women who are not well established by their eighteenth birthday should explore other channels immediately, attacking the career angle again at around seventy-five or so. Lady pianists should expect to reach their peak before their feet reach the pedals, and a writer like Minou Drouet, coming into her prime several years pre-eleven-plus, can clearly afford to mature gradually and may even be able to dispense with finishing schools and souped-up racing-cars.

## HOW TO LOOK

Study your type and then go against it. Since any woman who has learnt to read a caption with tolerable accuracy has no longer any reason for not being

stunningly well-dressed, good taste in clothes is no longer enough to get you into the Ten Most unless you have other assets, in the way that the Duchess of Windsor's heart has its reasons and Miss Audrey Hepburn's face has its eyebrows. Similarly, jive suits, the Italian Look, and all manner of zazouterie and Left Banking turns won't get you so much as the flicker of an eye from Scott-James and Perrick and Edwards unless you are incidentally a duchess, member of parliament, London county councillor or picaresque lady don.

## WHAT TO DO

For years now people have come to expect, nay to demand, that actresses, mothers, daughters, princesses, ambassadors, daily helps and governesses should be women, and capable of writing at least one or two books of frank and revealing memoirs, so there is no longer much fame attached to all that sort of thing. You could set your sights for being pope or prime minister, or even a modest bishop, but it may be a long road full of heartbreak, men being what they are to-day. Being a dustwoman, bookmaker, jockey, stockbroker, field-marshal, or queen of somewhere basically against the whole idea, such as India, Russia, or the United States, might give you a fair run while the novelty lasted. Saints are apt to find the going hard and prophets have practically no honours in their own countries, so really the best thing to do is to canalize all your energy into the process of abnormal growth.

## WHOM TO KNOW

The columnists are a tricky lot, proud, revengeful, ambitious, and apt to turn suspicious and nasty just when you think you've got them on your side. Great and Good Friends will generally only take you part of the way if they're that Great, and are often only too anxious to start being a Great and Good

Friend to somebody else. Political hostesses prefer men, and a good many successful men-about-town prefer cats. Cabinet ministers haven't a moment to call their own, especially at week-ends, and Greek shipowners are often simple domesticated creatures with complex beautiful wives. With really grand people you have to have some close point of contact, like being called Madre by the Duke of Edinburgh, or being able to chat cosily to the Directrice of Balmain about Vivien Olivier, or attending the same dancing class as the Duke of Cornwall, or owning a castle that Loelia, Duchess of Westminster, wants to have photographed for her magazine.

## HOW TO GET MENTIONED

Time was when almost any woman with her wits about her could qualify as a monstrous regiment. Nowadays you can wear yourself out dropping champagne glasses on the Duke of Kent's head, marrying Rubirosa, killing your leftover life, petitioning the Queen on the Centre Court itself, and all the thanks you get is to become a whatever-became-of in the sad long years to come. Women driven to desperate lengths have dared anything, Sabrina even learning to speak, but the trumpets are silent. No-one can honestly advise on this disheartening sub-section, and every woman must use her own judgment and go as far as her capabilities will allow.

## IF ALL ELSE FAILS

The best, if not necessarily the simplest, way of being famous as a woman is of course to begin or, as the Americans put it so succinctly, End as a Man. You have to have some sort of special licence for this, and may run into a lot of tiresome business with psychiatrists, Somerset House, and publishers' lawyers, so all other avenues should be explored first.

SIRIOL HUGH JONES

# Lecture

By CLAUD COCKBURN

**L**ECTURING at Basingstoke yesterday on "Is Blackmail Necessary?" Professor Farmer Cross won general approval for his uncompromising presentation of the thesis that not only is the method the neatest yet devised for attaining the desired results in the various fields under discussion but that any suggestion that valid alternatives exist smacks of down-right charlatanry.

"Whether it be in diplomacy, in business or indeed any other sphere of activity," said the Professor, "the slogan should be 'Get the goods on your man, then twist his arm.'"

Though a large majority of the audience was clearly in agreement with this view, a sharp and at times

painful discussion ensued between the Professor and followers of Dr. Bush Montgomery, whose treatise on "The Incidence of the Lush-up on what goes on" has had considerable influence.

"Are you trying to tell me," asked a man who gave his name as Brown, "that all the governments of the world whose embassies are known to flow with champagne in the confidence that they will gain the goodwill of their distinguished and powerful guests, all those mighty corporations whose entertainment of publicists and others rivals in magnificence the most splendid entertainments of Imperial Rome, are barking up the wrong tree?"

To a question from Professor Cross as to whether Mr. Brown had any

personal experience of this type of public relations, the latter, incautiously as soon appeared, replied that he had.

"And in your considered opinion," queried the Professor, "their cost is justified by results obtained?"

"Certainly," was understood to be Mr. Brown's reply.

It was one which brought the Professor to his feet, trembling with visible indignation.

"So," he said, "you admit that for a glass of wine, a dinner, a twenty-minute air-trip over the new works, a half-lobster on the yacht of some shady politician, you are immediately prepared to flood, so far as lies within your power, the press with lies, to conceal from the trusting public the true



character and objectives of all concerned, and to betray, without hesitation or scruple, the interests of your country? I see. There's a word for people of your sort, and let me say that I shall make it my business to draw the attention of the proper authorities to your views and activities."

It was learned later that the man Brown had been closely cross-questioned, at the instance of the Professor, as a bad security risk, and would have been removed from his position had it been one of even minimal significance.

As Brown, cowed by the Professor's cogent attack, left the hall in evident distress, a question was put as to whether, over a period of years, the influence of the Lush-up School upon boys and youths had not been thoroughly beneficial.

Speaking with some incoherence the questioner was understood to say "I well remember when I was a boy at school—"

"Do we have to listen to your life story?" snapped the Professor.

"It is germane," replied the other. "... I was subject to fits of depression. The future appeared to me dark and arduous. Then one day—a fine day indeed—in a work of fiction I read an episode in which someone called A who was trying to get someone called B to do something other than this man B was designing to do, invited B to his home and B, 'under,' the book said, 'the mellowing influence of a simple but exquisitely cooked dinner, and with one of his host's Havana cigars drawing well,' at once did whatever it was A wanted him to do.

"Pursuing the matter, I found that this scene recurs, in various forms, in innumerable such fictional works. 'The general, his stern features relaxing as he sipped a glass of memorable port, agreed that the whole unpleasant episode was best forgotten.'

"It was an eye-opener and an inspiration. I realized that in future life, should I want a man to give me his uranium mine or his strategic frontier, I had but to exert the mellowing influence of a simple but exquisitely cooked dinner, a bottle of champagne, and/or a good cigar, and the thing was in the bag. Cheered me up no end. Made the future look a lot easier."

"That," said the Professor, "is the kind of poisonous nonsense which



"As an old Syrian proverb puts it . . ."

distorts the vision of youth at the very outset. If you can't, I'm sure the rest of those present to-night can see that had you obtained possession of some filthy secret of the man's past and used it to the limit you could have saved the price of a cigar."

At this point there was a further interruption from a man who shouted "To the deuce with blackmail; give me bribery, give me corruption. Are you, who stand there calling yourself a Professor, ignorant of the effect upon the course of history ancient and modern of the straight, time-saving cash bribe—taking as it may the form of the French Government's annual payments to Charles II, or of gross overpayment for the avowable portion of services rendered, or of the crude yet psychologically sure-fire packet of the old crinkle slipped across the desk at the moment of recalcitrance or indecision? Blackmail, faugh!"

Appearing momentarily to lose his head, the Professor was understood to shout "Where were you on the night

of February 9? I'll get the goods on you yet. Who paid . . .?" the rest of his remarks were drowned in the uproar.

The meeting broke up amid cries of "Give them peacock's tongues," "Stick to single notes and you're home," "Find your cupboard and you'll find your skeleton."

The Chairman was barely to be heard as he invited the various participants in the discussion to a "little party" he was giving at his home where they could meet some of those interested in promoting a little scheme he happened to be interested in too.

The Professor at first objected, on the ground that that sort of promotion was a form of the Lush-up and thus against his principles. However, at a whispered word from the Chairman he was seen to blench, and muttered "How the devil . . .?"

"Never mind how I know," said the other.

"Okay," said the Professor, "I'll come."

Another Sizzling Exposé Exclusive To CONFIDANTE!

# THE GOALIE

## Who Cuddled at Half-Time

A bit of he-man Archie Lumpe's career that missed the sports page!

Who Was the Curvy Eyeful in Stackley Rovers' Dressing Room That Day?

**F**EW of the fans packing the terraces at Stackley Park in a drizzle of rain during the home team's tussle with Dinge United could have guessed who waited in the dressing-room for burly Archie Lumpe as he trotted from the field when the half-time whistle blew that Saturday afternoon.

There on a chair sat a long-legged blonde with a small parcel in her hand, her loose-fitting coat falling open to reveal a beige hand-knitted two-piece under which nothing covered the lush curves of her mature body except her underwear. From her lips hung a lighted cigarette.

### "Give Us a Kiss, Love . . ."

This was an Archie the fans did not know. For as the six-foot wizard of the net entered the dressing-room he lifted the languorous blonde out of the chair and said "Give us a kiss, love!"

"Don't be daft," said Lily. "I've brought your sandwiches."

### Fubbed his Knee . . .

There and then, in full view of his team-mates as they lounged around in their blue shorts on that autumn afternoon in 1925, Archie Lumpe planted a kiss on the blonde's lips that took her breath away.

And none of those tough, action-loving soccer kings turned a hair! Not even as she gently rubbed his sprained knee with embrocation.

### Locked in a Cubicle . . .

From his locked cubicle, Archie next produced a bottle of lemonade, and soon the dressing-room was filled with drinking footballers, while Archie and his thirty-nine-year-old wife sat side by side

discussing their son's spots.

What would the fans have given for just a peep at this extraordinary scene? What happen-  
(Turn to page 41)

NEXT MONTH: **Mary Had a Little Lamb. By Whom . . .?**

ALEX

What is this paper really like that hits the headlines day after day?

Read **CONFIDANTE** each month for the truth.

Norman Macisbridge

## P.R. Moves in M.E.

By PHILIP HOLLAND

AD men, excited by the news that "a Radio Luxembourg style broadcasting station in the Middle East is one of the operations envisaged by the Government in its new plan aimed to boost Britain abroad," have been busy with plans to meet this new opportunity for promotional imagination. Among them Marcus Rolls, who said that Scrumptious Breakfast Foods planned an aggressive Middle East campaign in which the new radio media would play a big part.

Scrumptious, in co-operation with their advertising practitioners, had designed for their product a new pack which would contain, in addition to recipes appealing to the Arab palate (Scrumptious and dates, Scrumptious and hashish, etc.), short, dramatic stories designed to illustrate the part which Britain had played in the development of the Middle East. Gimmick to enhance Scrumptious-appeal was that the first half of each story would be broadcast in dramatic form over the new radio station, while the second half, which would, of course, include the hard-sell for Scrumptious, would be printed on the pack. Six such stories, broadcast Saturday through Thursday (Friday is the Moslem Sunday) would be used and each would be given a number corresponding to that on the pack, so that there should be no confusion.

The subjects of the playettes had not yet been finally decided but, Marcus Rolls pointed out, the British had such long-standing connections with the Middle East that the main problem might be what to leave out. There were, for example, the Crusades, which had brought many new developments (armour, etc.) to what in deference to the Arab view would be referred to as Palestine. Then there was Fitzgerald, whose poems had brought Arab culture to the West. British archaeologists had added greatly to modern Egypt's knowledge of its ancient past, and indeed it was doubtful if, but for their keenness, many of the ancient tombs would ever have been opened at all.

His mind, Marcus Rolls said, was running along the possibility of using the Suez Canal. He realized that there were difficulties here. But his own feeling was that there was now no reason

why the Arab should not be reminded, and be interested to know, of the dramatic way in which the British built the Canal, or at any rate acquired an interest in it. Scrumptious had a great future in the Arab world and he looked forward to including in the campaign not only reminders of what the Middle East owed to the British in the past but what they owed them at present. Britishers who had spent most of their working lives in Egypt, and who had in some cases only recently left it, would be invited to say, in Scrumptious-sponsored programmes, what their experiences had taught them about the Middle East generally and Egypt in particular. Some, who had already been approached, had said that they were more than ready to take part in the programmes and to suggest uses which Arabs might find for Scrumptious.

The co-operation of heads of Arab States, Marcus Rolls admitted, had been more difficult to secure. This was not, of course, because they doubted the high vitamin and protein values which were built in to Scrumptious by a special process developed in their contemporary laboratories but rather because the present diplomatic situation made it necessary for a head of State to know, before endorsing the product, whether in doing so he would be seeming to align—or in some cases not to align—himself with the policy adopted by a neighbouring country whose goodwill—or in some cases intransigent attitude—was a matter for concern. To overcome this problem he had arranged a cocktail party, to be held in Jerusalem, to which heads of State of all Middle East countries would be invited, and he would take the opportunity of resolving any misunderstandings which might exist.

Market research had shown, Marcus Rolls revealed, that the calorie intake of many Middle East natives was grossly inadequate. The average Arab listener, he was sure, would not be satisfied when he realized how wide was the gulf between his diet and that of the British. Scrumptious, the message in this promotion would be, could and should bridge the gulf. Babies were important here. Babies thrive on Scrumptious and many British babies had been

brought up on it. Thousands of these babies were now men—others of course were women, or in some cases still babies—and many of the men were serving in the Services. Members of the Services found themselves from time to time in the Middle East, and he had made arrangements to ensure that the fact that Scrumptious was an issue to British troops, whose health and vigour were a byword, would be a big selling point in the campaign.

The best media for rural areas, of which there were many in the Middle East, was aircraft, and he had arranged, Marcus Rolls said, that a fleet of these should support the radio campaign by dropping free samples of Scrumptious on outlying villages. The most elaborate precautions would be taken to ensure that no native would be struck by an off-target free sample. For clearly, he concluded, any injury to the population would defeat the object of the campaign, which was to show our friends in the Middle East what Britain wanted to do for them.

"He would hope that the Soviet Union, too, could learn how to make 'clean' bombs and use them."

*Birmingham Post and Gazette*

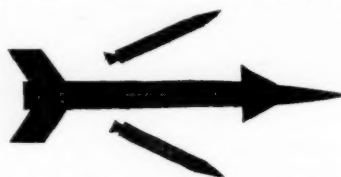
And what?



"Very well, then, Mr. Chilcott, perhaps you wouldn't mind submitting your eggs to a lie-detector test?"



**AIR DISPLAY  
5 MILES**



**AIR DISPLAY  
3 MILES**



**AIR DISPLAY  
1 MILE**

## Instructions for Those Visiting Farnborough

**I**N a dingy side street near the Old Vic there is a tea shop with the notice: "Young women not served here." To keep the numbers of guests down and to eliminate any suggestion of frivolity, similar sexual discrimination is applied by the Society of British Aircraft Constructors for its annual display. With a few exceptions those unable to pass a physiological means-test are not invited to the aerodrome during the early guest-days, nor to the show banquet. Even so the demand for passes exceeds the supply. People like to converge upon the aerodrome from all parts of the world and the S.B.A.C.'s task is not to attract but to repel. So to obtain the right kind of pass you must stick at nothing. I warn you that the overalls, bucket-and-ladder technique will not work. You will be flung out. Passes are as precious as plutonium. V.I.P. badges are flaunted in the enclosures at Farnborough with the importunate pride of bosoms and backsides at Cannes.

By OLIVER STEWART

Your first intimation of the quality of the programme will come at the S.B.A.C. banquet, which is a prodigious disciplined mass feeding. Waiters and waitresses descend upon the concentration of diners like a division of paratroopers. There is a tremendous clashing of cutlery. The servers withdraw, re-form, then rush in for the mopping up. Between these operations you will learn from your neighbour that Farnborough will not be so good this year: there is nothing new—absolutely nothing. Manned aircraft are out of date and you cannot fire missiles at Farnborough. From the entertainment point of view, of course, the show will be deadly. If you would care to give it a miss your neighbour thinks that he knows of someone who could probably do with a spare pass.

What? Business makes it necessary for you to be there? How dreary. No, your neighbour says that *he* simply

*must* be there because of the Argentinian delegation—technical liaison, you know. Hydraulic pumps and all that. Such a bore. Deadly. Frightful.

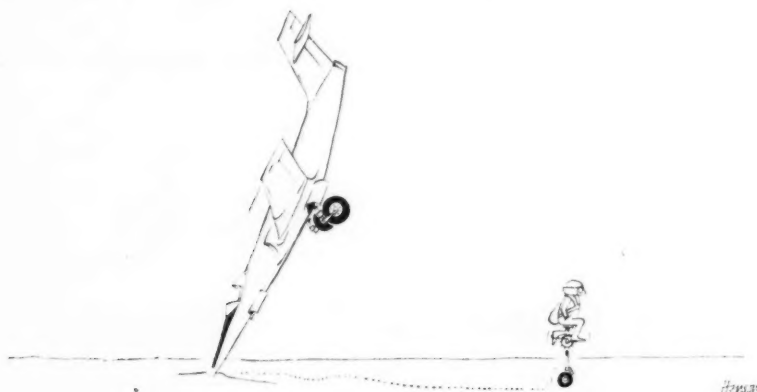
As a commentator I attend the briefing of the test pilots. They are cheerfully pessimistic.

"Can't do anything this year, old boy. I'm limited to 400 knots and at that the vibration shakes my teeth out."

"Nothing new, old man. Same old stuff. Put on the same record. It must be getting a bit worn by now."

The Senior Air Traffic Control Officer is no more reassuring. Somebody has again been admitted who is flying without radio. Would you believe it, in 1957! The Commanding Officer and chairman of the flying control committee is minatory. Remember, now; no low flying; no flying over the crowd; no pointing towards the enclosures, and pilots must keep clear of the hospital, of the town, of grazing cattle, of the cemetery and of the Queen's Hotel. Is that clearly understood? Anybody coming below the height of the control tower will be banned from flying for the rest of the week. Meanwhile the Director and the Assistant Directors of the S.B.A.C. do their best to sooth infuriated exhibitors, confused officials, importunate photographers, threatening newspaper men, harassed contractors and hysterical security officers.

If, through an oversight, you are not invited to the President's tent I recommend that you accept an invitation to watch the flying from one of the belvederes or gazebos on the side of the hill. They are spoken of as "caravans," are officially described as "sites," look





## AIR DISPLAY

like tents and turn out to contain oak-panelled rooms with Adam fireplaces, period furniture, paintings by Corot, and chandeliers. Legendary butlers (the catering resources of Barrows and of Portland and Jason are ransacked for imposing personalities) circulate discreetly with glasses of champagne. From the veranda you can look out over the main runway and watch the marvellous toys—Vulcan, Victor, Scimitar, Sea Vixen, Gnat, P.1—as they are brought on one by one.

Most of them are metal shells containing a number of rapidly spinning wheels and a tortured tangle of wires and pipes in the midst of which a man is strapped down. The latest jet fighters and bombers are the product of vast scientific and research efforts, of wind-tunnel experiments, of complicated calculations by electronic computers, of the expenditure of millions of money, of the application of the massed engineering experience and inventive genius of the centuries. And they are utterly useless. That is what gives them their perennial and irresistible charm.

When, to the confused background noise of my commentary, they take off or appear over the runway, to roll or to make a fast run, you will leave your champagne and be transfixed by their delicate strength and their agility and by the way they are made to work. You and your host will surrender your attention to these fascinating little bits of bent tin. But be ready to agree when your host, eyes riveted to the runway, remarks that really the flying part of the show is uninteresting and unimportant and that it is the *business contacts* and the *export orders* that matter. The display, he implores you to remember, is a strictly *commercial occasion*.

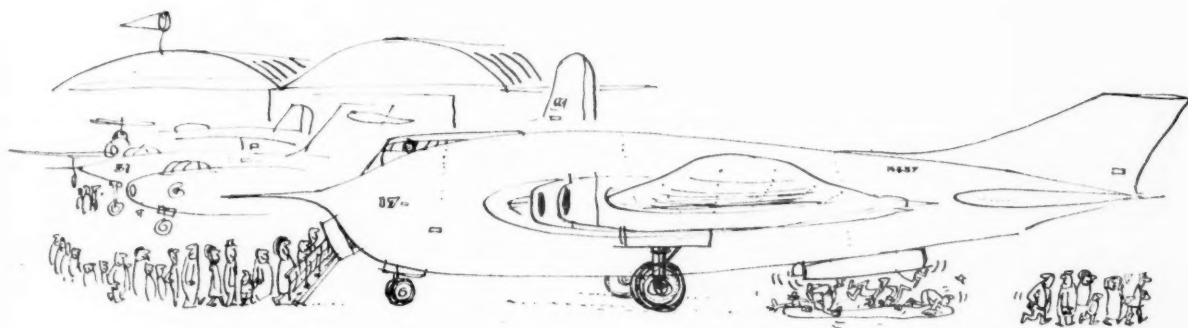
This is your opportunity to make the superior point—still without taking your eyes off the runway—that there is nothing new about jet aircraft. They burn fuel and use the heat to keep them aloft as did the Montgolfier of Pilâtre de Rozier and the Marquis d'Arlandes in 1783. It is also a good moment to refer to the most popular criticism of the British aircraft industry. These aircraft, you can say, may show that British designers are brilliantly inventive and original; but look at our production! Just look at our production! Compared with the American, it is chickenfeed. Our production lines are a laughing stock. Compare them, for instance, with Boeing—or Douglas. Now that is production.

The Americans are producing over 1,000 major units each month. They turned out thousands of B.47s. Super Sabres are pouring out. And their production is increasing every day.

Why, the United States aircraft industry is so efficient that the Americans can give thousands of their aircraft away to different countries or have them co-cooned at Prestwick or dump them into the sea. Now if only the British aircraft industry would learn how to produce on a big scale in series we might also be able to dump our aircraft into the sea.

Often it either rains or snows during the Farnborough show; but such is the radar equipment of the control tower that if those in the belvederes can see the aircraft the show will go on, moving at an ever-mounting pace towards its climax.

We have come a long way in the forty-nine years and four months since Cody brought the name of Laffan's Plain to the notice of the public. And now here is the newest and most sensational exhibit. With slab tail and blown flaps: probably aeroclinic wings and jet deflection; no doubt re-heat and rockets, and, for all I know, irreversible, duplicated power controls with variable datum and artificial feel, it is the most powerful, the fastest, the quickest climbing, the most manoeuvrable and the noisiest aircraft in the world. It is piloted by a robust but cynical young man who is not going to let anybody go away without being aware of those facts. It hurtles into the arena; a concussion smites the ear; the air is rent by the roar of re-heat, the ground shakes. In five minutes the eardrums hurt, the eyes smart, the brain reels. Dazed, battered, deafened, you will stagger to your car convinced that you have seen a splendid display.



# Tatty Old Aircraft

By H. F. ELLIS

**A**N odd result of the high rate of progress in modern engineering design is that nothing looks really up-to-date. Even brand new mechanical apparatus is seen to be, potentially at least, hopelessly old-fashioned as it trundles off the assembly-line.



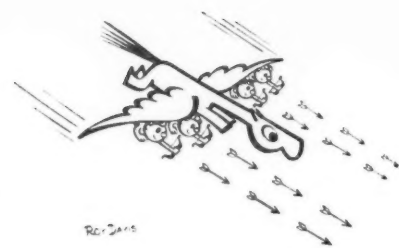
This was not always so, let me tell the younger people. Thirty years ago, in the hey-day of the motor-car, it was impossible to conceive of anything significantly in advance of the new models. A cigar-lighter perhaps in next year's version, or some unintelligible modification to the suspension; but the car, as a car, had arrived. It had reached the highest imaginable peak of cardom. In Victoria's time the situation must have been even more so. The latest thing in broughams, or in phonographs for that matter, did not, one may be sure, strike its contemporaries as a weird makeshift that would have to do until something better turned up. The railway engines built by Ivatt and Webb and Worsdell around the turn of the century were regarded, with reason, as representing about the limit of human skill and ingenuity. Even now they hardly look old-fashioned. It will be another

ten years before they look frankly ridiculous.

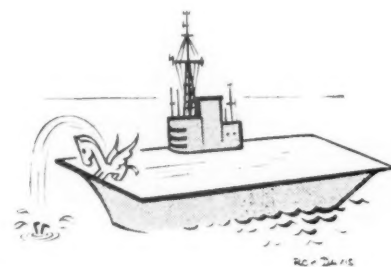
The Douglas DC-7C is ridiculous already. I want no libel actions, and hasten to say that it is the finest aircraft of its type ever made. So is the Lockheed Super Constellation. So are the Bristol Britannia, the Boeing Strato-cruiser and the Vickers Viscount. But they are all ridiculous. Anything that has visibly rotating parts is *ipso facto* absurd. One of them is lumbering past my window at this moment, making an out-of-date bumbling noise and positively heaving itself along by clawing at the air in front of it with a row of high-speed fans.

Well, of course, you can say that we are in a transitional phase between the petrol engine and the pure jet, and that aeroplanes with propellers naturally become quaint as soon as the eye and the mind become accustomed to jet aircraft—just as even the rebuilt Royal Scots and the stripped-down Merchant Navy class engines will look old-world when they are outnumbered by diesel-electric locomotives. When the Comet is back in service and the Boeing 707s appear, then we shall have something really up-to-date to coo over.

I cannot accept this for a moment. Nobody can tell me that an aircraft that carries its engines in pods on the end of long stalks sticking out in front of the wings is the last word in design. Even the very earliest cars did better than that. Nor that anything so cumbersome as to require several miles of runway to start and stop is even remotely modern. Vertical take-off and descent is an accomplished fact, and a machine that can't achieve either is half-way to the dust-bin. There's the trouble. These designers get so far ahead of themselves



that what they actually *finish* is bound to smell of mildew and antimacassars. Take wings. I won't go so far as to say that they look wrong exactly as yet. Seen from the ground, glinting in the sun in a stiffish bank, they sometimes have quite a professional air. But looked at, necessarily one at a time, from inside the fuselage, they cannot be enthused over. I feel uneasy about them. Not apprehensive exactly. Obviously they are more securely attached to the main framework than appears to be the case and do not mind being shaken about by the enormously heavy-looking engines they have to carry. But these large sailing-surfaces with rows of little studs all over them have an undeniably schoolboy look. I



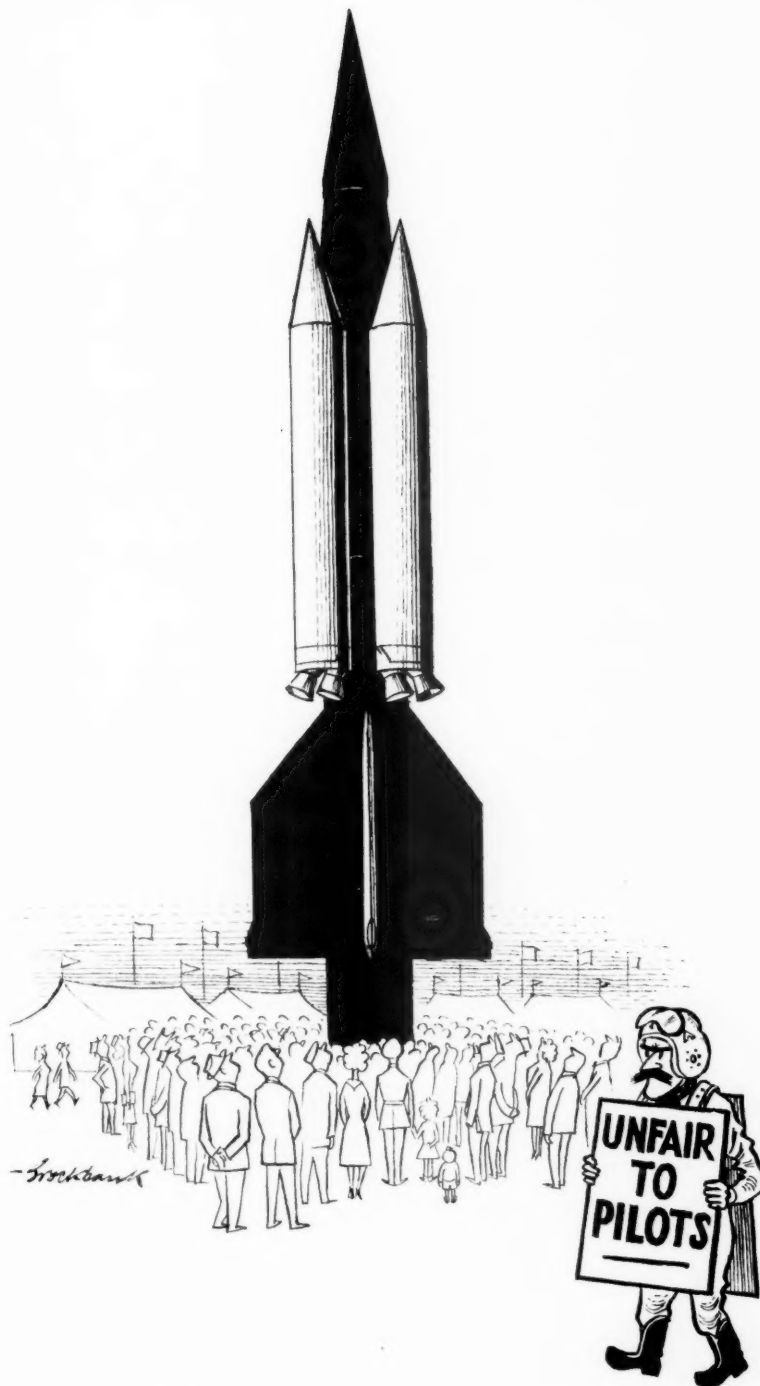
know they are shaped with extraordinary cunning to obtain maximum lift and minimum drag and vortical disturbance (or thereabouts), but that doesn't alter the fact that they are a hangover from the paper darts we used to make. Here we are, some sixty of us high above the Atlantic, safer than we should be in a motor-car and able to converse freely with London and New York—and it doesn't seem right that we should be sitting in a kind of glorified glider, towed along by screws that are themselves rotated by the action of innumerable pistons, each of which comes to a dead stop goodness



knows how many thousand times a minute. We are steered, it is hardly necessary to say, by the pulling to and fro of hinged flaps, which catch the wind.

I do not propose to waste my breath over the helicopter. It is astonishing to me that so childish a contraption should be so constantly written up in the newspapers. In my extreme youth we used to buy, for as little as threepence I believe, a spiral skewer, a hollow cylinder with an internal diameter in excess of that of the skewer, and a tin propeller with a hole in the middle. When pushed smartly up the skewer by means of the cylinder, the propeller would soar away and hit the ceiling a satisfactory crack. It never occurred to us that this crazy principle would be used for carrying generals about, still less that, in order to prevent the general from rotating while the screw kept still, it would be necessary to attach a smaller windmill at the back. Nothing so ripe for a museum has ever, to my knowledge, been in regular use before. Even the Farnborough organizers, by no means inclined to play down the achievements of the aircraft industry, realize that the proper function of the helicopter is to raise laughter.

I don't at all want to decry the achievements of the aircraft industry myself. On the contrary. I want to admire them to the hilt. I want to gasp with astonished incredulity at the power, speed, beauty and modernity of the latest productions of the designers' skill. But how can one do that if they will keep letting one know that something much better is just round the corner? There are few satisfactions in life to equal the first viewing of a really superb piece of machinery. But one must feel that this is the latest thing, this is it. It doesn't help to know that the damned old thing came off the drawing-board in 1950 and first flew in 1952, nor that what they are working on now is a kind of rocket-powered wingless 6,000 m.p.h. cigar. All I ask is that the industry should tighten up its schedules a bit and progress from drawing-board to finished product within the year. Either that, or they had better keep their newest inventions under their hats until they are ready to bring them into service. Then we should all feel a bit less horse-drawn at four hundred miles an hour.



# Critics at Farnborough

(Crowded out of the later pages by the Edinburgh Festival)



## IN THE HANGAR

*The De Vickiland Vertigo*

IF you consider the whole body of De Vickiland's work, it is surprising how many different facets of his genius display themselves in a quite unpredictable sequence. The impressive dignity of the *Vulture* bomber was followed less than a year later by the mercurial grace of the *Vitriol* fighter. Among more recent work, you find the monumental *Vatican*, with its unforgettable jets embedded as inextricably in the leading-edge of that portentous wing as stuffing in a Christmas turkey; then barely eighteen months afterwards there came the *Vitamin* trainer, a miracle of gaiety and elegance.

But from none of De Vickiland's previous work would you have guessed that he would create anything like the indubitable masterpiece that is now

presented to us. The *VERTIGO* (De Vickiland Aircraft, £450,000) takes us into realms hitherto unexplored. The old, almost too literary, approach to the problem of combining aerofoils with fuselage has gone completely; here instead are stark angular surfaces, forbidding indeed at first glance, but taking on, as you become more familiar with them, a new and compelling urgency that is essentially of our age.

The action, as in none of De Vickiland's previous designs except perhaps the immature *Vaudeville*, little regarded by modern aircraft critics, begins harshly and noisily, and the 'plane moves off at a cracking pace that is hardly ever allowed to slacken until the final landing. For pilots on the look-out for something new I cannot recommend the *Vertigo* too highly.

It is an Aeroplane Society recommendation for September.



## AT THE JOYSTICK

*Squadron-Leader Kevin Earl*  
(HAWKER HANDGRENADE)

FOR the fourth year in succession Kevin Earl has brought his programme of sophisticated aerobatics to delight his thousands of devoted fans at Farnborough.

This year he has devised some interesting and complex movements which manage subtly to convey the atmosphere of test-flying while never descending to the level of mere exhibitionism. If, as some of my colleagues maintained, there was a hint of the commonplace in the *enchaînement* that ended with a long *vol plané* and a sudden vertical ascent—demonstrating to the full Earl's astonishing elevation—followed by six *fouettés* in each direction, then it passed me by.

His slow movements and impassive use of the control surfaces are in effective contrast to the brutal angularity of some of his faster *bravura* flying. The element of display is present rather by definition than by demonstration. And for me there was one absolutely unforgettable moment when, after a superbly graceful dive past the stands, he turned on the re-heat and rose like a flower to disappear from sight at eighty thousand feet. Flying like this is not seen every day.



## ON THE STANDS

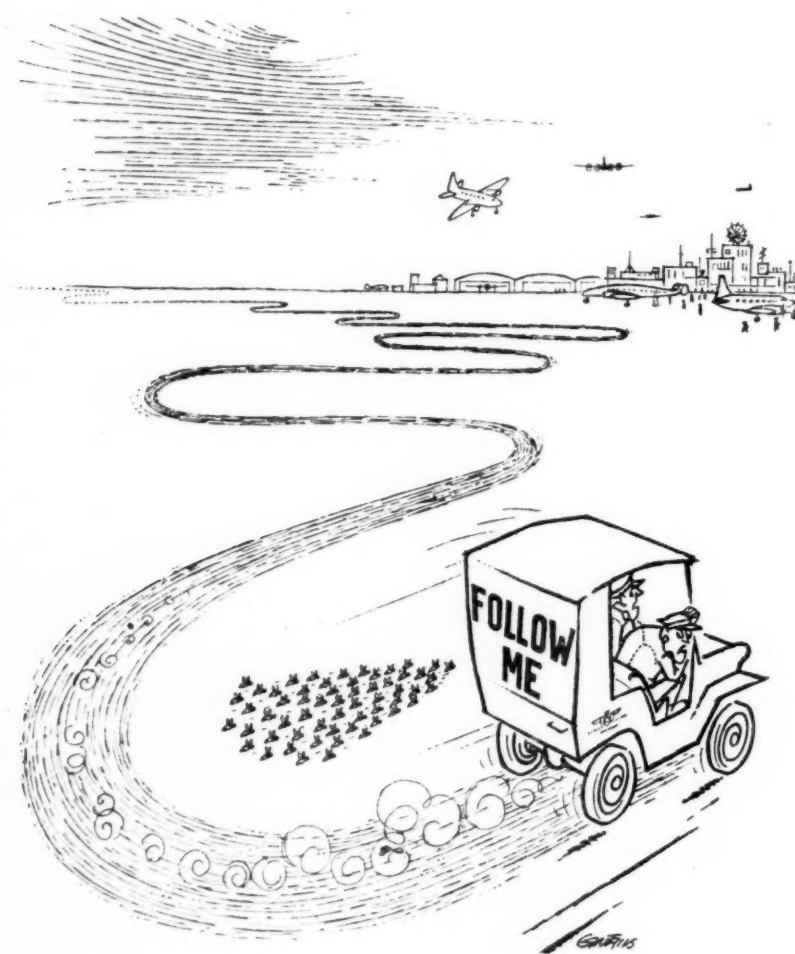
*Jets for this Year*

NO airman who aspires to be in the fashion to-day can afford to be without at least one of the new jets which are shown in such profusion in the vast canvas *salon* that forms the centrepiece of this year's static display. A single jet in the belly is the vogue for the smaller 'plane, but in the larger ones you can wear one on each side or even two. The ungraceful American style of wearing them in separate little reticules where they stick out awkwardly in mid-air has not yet reached us, but we have got to be prepared for almost anything now without a flicker of our delicately-pencilled eyebrows.

Bristol, Rolls-Royce, Armstrong-Whitworth and a host of others are all showing their newest designs, and the final choice is almost a matter of caprice.

Among the rockets I noticed a long, sharply-pointed model from Fairey, with the now fashionable boosters clustered about the lower half. Rockets are still regarded on the whole as a rather daring innovation, but I think we shall be seeing them increasingly. Russia in particular, a comparative newcomer in this field, is said to have some spectacular models on the way, if "on the way" is not a slightly misleading phrase to use in that context.

B. A. YOUNG



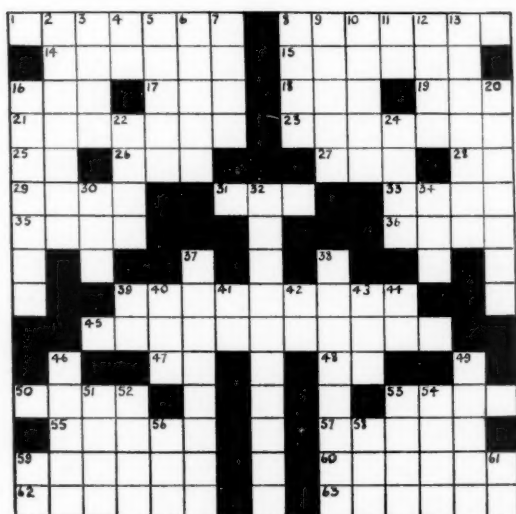


## Farnborough Crossword

### ACROSS

*The four two-letter words form ONE LIMIT.*

1. Does this officer deserve such an authority? (7)
8. If a dent is straightened out, you can take off, rebelliously. (7)
14. Despite the direction in the title, he is going the wrong way. (6)
15. Information in a girl makes a list. (6)
16. Return an essential curtailed for the result. (3)
17. With fifty it could swim in it. (3)
18. Carried by a mourner. (3)
19. Bader and Johnson were in this category. (3)
21. Gilbertian no one. (7)
23. From the comb see what has come to be. (7)
26. 21 has lost its corpse. (3)
27. A late arrival has it. (3)
29. Antonio's was on behalf of Bassanio. (4)
31. The third service is the reverse of distant. (3)
33. A deposit but not a safe one. (4)



*Solution next week.*

35. Devout if I enter this composition disarranged. (4)
36. One of those that hide the wood. (4)
39. Termini for 45. (9)
45. Transport I commonly catch in a stormy harbour. (11)
50. Corps are scarce. (4)
53. State administered by the League of Nations after the first World War. (4)
55. Of Greek origin but modern design. (5)
57. Danger to flying but sounds as if I am in good spirit. (5)
59. Treble scope for opening tactics. (6)
60. Hit two balls or enable balls to hit. (6)
62. Put a point in a box to make it. (6)
63. A horse and a half are naturally confused. (6)

### DOWN

*The eight two-letter words form CENSOR GIN PINCHER.*

2. Encourages that browned off feeling. (1, 6)
3. The string for that air would make frosty dirty. (4)
5. Mainly for training and son loses the copper. (5)
6. Born with half a ditch indigent. (5)
7. Wander with a pole or a try. (4)
8. Smear a bud. (4)
9. Downy but not out, mostly regretful. (5)
10. Hedge receiver or use a sword. (5)
12. The first arrival is present the morning after. (4)
13. An aerial body. (7)
16. Air loss can lead to the nucleus of another service. (7)
20. See Troy for a mystery. (7)
22. Forbids another point for the proclamation. (4)
24. With a hundred start the engine is not needed. (4)
30. The family includes the little but the great one became extinct in the nineteenth century. (3)
32. Fagin would not have had any interest in this type. (10)
34. Fighter shows wrath at losing seductress. (3)
37. A neat lie to estrange. (8)
38. A trick if placed between skill and freeze. (8)
40. "The signal—that looks on Hsley down." (M. Arnold.) (3)
43. One man short? With a pole, shoot. (3)
46. Echoes from a theatrical school with one of the essential three. (5)
49. He was not all agog. (5)
51. Mere corps. (4)
52. Was the Spanish graduate in exile too? (4)
53. Part of his ingenuity is musical. (4)
54. A large quantity makes this money into food. (4)
56. One of the passerine family. (3)
58. May be carried for others. (3)

# Retail Hazards

By R. G. G. PRICE

WHEN small shops change hands, said Mr. Holdsworth, what they've been before lingers on in the minds of the shoppers like a woman's maiden name in the early days of marriage. It was not realizing this that made my change from deck-chair attendant to retailer such a weak move. The Council I worked for allotted a span to all grades and when I was near retiring age I saw I should have to settle to some other work soon. I looked round for a shop and in Decorum Episcopi I found a little lock-up on the south side of The Marlings, the main street there. There was a row of buildings, all solidly built in port-coloured brick. Visitors usually like half-timbering if they cannot have the sea; but I was told that they were beginning to look at these and call them Queen Anne or Regency or similar terms of praise.

I took the shop over from Carter's the cobblers and I changed the name to The Kiosk and sold confectionery,

because being new to trade I could not think of what else there was to sell and I had often seen good money paid for sweets when I was doing my deck-chair round.

Shoppers in a hurry kept rushing in and holding out shoes and asking how long they would take to sole. I could not afford to have a big stock right off so there were vacant spaces in the shop, and if customers were looking at them they might easily miss the wrapped bars and the bottles of gums and toffees. One of the lines with which The Kiosk was stocked was liquorice bootlaces, and several pairs were bought in error.

I had read somewhere that rapidly adjusting yourself to public demand is the most important thing in shop-keeping, and as it seemed to me that there was a demand for shoe-repairs I hurriedly hired a man who knew how to sole and heel and put down the first payment for machines. It took up all the rest of my savings. The day I reopened as a cobbler nobody brought

me any shoes and I had to keep refusing requests for sweets. Also I sold several pairs of ordinary shoe-laces to customers who wanted liquorice ones. I learned my lesson and I went back to deck-chairs. I was lucky enough to find a council who were not sticklers for youth and I own it was a relief to be back in a town with a recreation ground where people had a holiday feeling and paid to sit down instead of perching on the thick iron bridge at the lower end of The Marlings and shouting insults at the fish in the local Avon.

I was encouraged to cut myself loose from retailing by the experience of the business on my right-hand side. The premises were a double-fronted shop and sometimes it was all one establishment and sometimes it was divided into two shops with a window each. The left-hand side was a pet shop and this did so well it bought out the right-hand side, which sold Toddler-Wear. The first day that the whole space was used for pets an irritated woman, the kind of woman who pushes into shops backwards, pulled her twins inside and had their woollies half over their heads when they were bitten by a macaw. She sued, of course, but she lost the case on the ground that customers ought to notice what shop they are in. Then she appealed and the court said it was the duty of shops to impress on the minds of even the most unreasonable people what dangers a reasonable man might run in them. This worried Mrs. Hope at the pet shop terribly and her lawyers went to the House of Lords and though it was chiefly taken with the victims' being twins it did say that the family were not intending to buy pets and this made them trespassers.

My kiosk was taken over by the cosmetics department of Wilson's, the chemists the other side of the pet shop. They wanted Mrs. Hope to move along but she refused. The mothers who came in from the outlying hamlets by Saturday buses still expected to be able to buy toddler-wear and some of the more weather-hardened refused to believe they couldn't if they tried hard enough. They jammed the space between the dispensing counter, the scales and the photographic display in the chemist's,



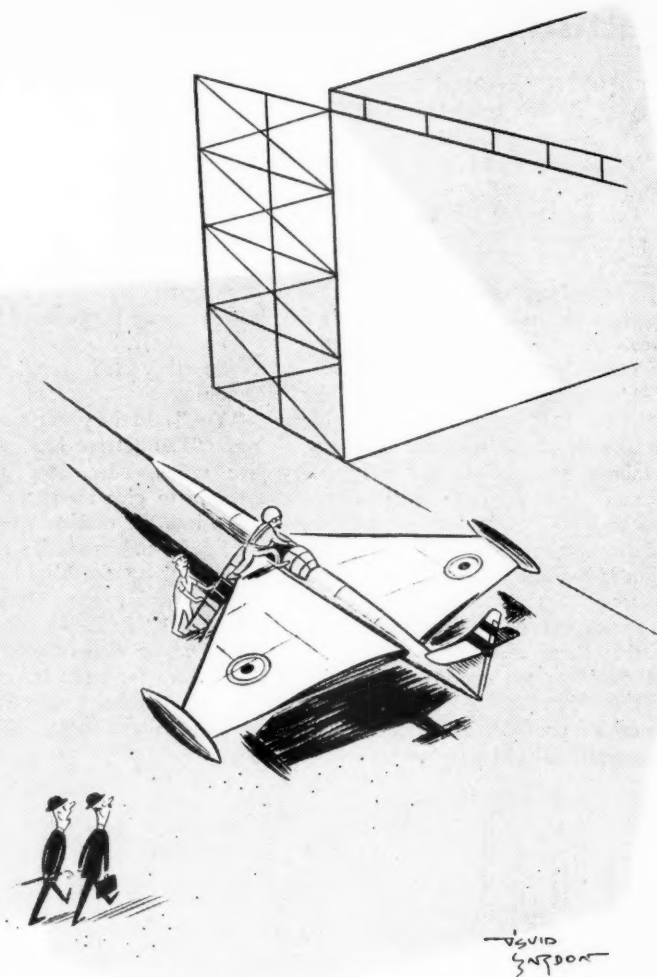
"It's no good looking for a double meaning among that lot."

the space between the budgerigars and the tropical fish in the pet shop and the space between the nail polishes and the home perms in the cosmetic department. They also unfolded their prams and got them interlocked on the pavement outside.

One morning when I had a day off I came in on the bus to Decorum Episcopi to see how my old neighbours were getting along. I dropped in on Mrs. Hope in the middle of her birds and beasts and fish and trainee girls, who always seemed to be freckled. She was busy serving one of her best customers for tortoises and I waited quite happily looking round and feeling glad to be out of it but remembering all the same I had once been my own boss. A deliveryman came in and vaguely thinking he knew me as a local trader he gave me a delivery note and without thinking, except that I was saving Mrs. Hope trouble, I signed it. Then I saw the customer was going into the ages of some hedgehogs so I wandered out. Unfortunately, I heard later, the pet shop had once been a monumental mason's and what I had signed for was a very long-delayed order in the ornamental urn line.

I scarcely knew my old kiosk. While I was waiting for the assistant I had some trouble with a man who turned really nasty because he said I had had a pair of his mountaineering brogues for eight months. He looked as though he was ready to hit me but his eye was caught by an enormous surf-riding nude in cardboard and I took the chance of slipping away to the chemist's, where there was an elderly couple who remembered the shop from its health food days. They were telling the rather snooty dispenser that her oak-gall rissoles were unbeatable. The man said they were more life-enhancing than all the chemicals people swilled down and to give the girl a chance of a hearty guffaw in working-hours the woman shouted "Synthetic vitamins!" and laughed with a noise like a tuba.

I felt a bit in the way wherever I went that morning and I was not sorry to get off back home. One of Mrs. Hope's trainees was on the bus and she told me that Mrs. Hope often got handed small parcels of money by an old man who thought it was still the Rates Office, so this lingering on is not always pure loss, after all.



*"Shall we mention it's scrapped before he flight-tests it?"*

## Tudor Aspersions

"THOU jestedst when thou swor'st that thou betrothedst  
The wench thou boastedst that thou lustedst for!  
Thou thwartedst those thou saidst thou never loathedst,  
But laudedst those that thou distrustedst more!  
Ah, if thou manifestedst all thou insistedst,  
Nor coaxedst those that thou convincedst not,  
Nor vex'dst the ear thou wish'dst that thou enlistedst . . ."

"Thou'dst spit upon me less, thou sibilant sot!"

R. A. PIDDINGTON

# Candidus and the Atom

By LORD KINROSS

A NOTICE, printed large on the high wire fence bade Candidus Beware of the Dog.

"The dog?" he exclaimed in astonishment. "Is this not then an atomic pile?"

"Certainly. But the British have a deeper respect for dogs than for the atom."

"This place," he said with some asperity, "is no dog kennel. It is a place where men are plotting to destroy the human race."

Thus we entered the gates of Calder Hall, its Babylonian towers soaring confidently above us into the grey, Cumbrian sky. Soon we were circulating among vast, indeterminate machines, painted in Regency colours, while a young man in a white coat, with a film in the lapel, explained to us how neutrons were rushing around in them at top speed, and colliding with atoms and splitting them and fusing with them and making more and more neutrons and reducing elements already unstable to a critical condition and thus generating a great deal of heat—but no noise.

"The neutrons do it all very quietly," the young man explained.

"It won't be so quiet when the bomb goes off," said Candidus tartly.

"The bomb?" the young man inquired with an air of some puzzlement. "We know nothing of that here."

"He means the device," I explained. Turning to Candidus, I added: "Here atomic energy is produced for peaceful purposes only."

"So they tell you," commented Candidus.

"Yes," said the young man, brightening. "The hot gas heats the water to give steam, which we feed to the turbines to give electricity, which we pump into the national grid."

"I quite understand," said Candidus. "Radioactivity for the home." He backed quickly away from a notice which said "Radiation. Keep Away."

The young man smiled. "You can stand there for eight hours a day for forty years without exceeding the permissible daily dosage. But not for longer."

"Dosage!" Candidus, as we proceeded, looked more and more nervous. He would not eat any luncheon.

"Don't touch the fish," he warned me. "It will almost certainly be radioactive. I have been reading a book called *Fall Out*, by a lady named Pirie, who says that marine biological establishments in the United States are curtailing their plans because fish, following the bomb tests, is likely to become unsuitable for human consumption. Leave the mutton alone too. Its bones are certain to be impregnated with Strontium 90—more especially in this area of hill-grazing, with so heavy a rainfall, right on the borders of Lancashire."

I ate my meal, none the less, but was glad to get Candidus aboard the train for London soon after. Morbidly, however, he insisted on pursuing his inquiries, so I took him down to the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell. On Didcot platform I noticed him shying away from a pile of laundry baskets.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

"Can you not see? They contain Radioactive Isotopes."

He tried to drag me back as I bent to examine the label. It read, "Caution. Radioactive Material. 45 mc. of Na. To be opened only by addressee. No person will remain within three feet of this container unnecessarily."

"You will observe also," he remarked, "that it is addressed to the Naval Yard of Vickers-Armstrong at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Yet you will be telling me, I suppose, that this Establishment too is devoted to peaceful ends."

Rain began to fall as we reached the Establishment. "Radioactive," muttered Candidus, brushing the drops off his clothes as he hurried through it to the headquarters of the Security Police. Here he was given a badge marked U—for Unclassified, protesting a little that as an important person from another world he should be given S for Secret or at least C for Confidential. Then we drove in a bus down Roentgen Avenue, past the Pool—the Instrument Loan Pool—between herbaceous borders and handsome buildings in the style of Queen Anne, to H.10, where an amiable doctor received us. Candidus remarked that



the doctor seemed distressingly young to be engaged in so nefarious a task. The doctor treated us to coffee in plastic cups, instructed us urbanely about the habits of a variety of elements, named after classical gods and heroes—Uranium, Plutonium, Cesium, Promethium and a supreme new element called Nobelium—then took us to visit some noble piles called Zephyr and Dido and Zeus.

"I am in no way deceived by these high-sounding names," Candidus said. "They are devised merely to cover the diabolical purposes of the Establishment."

"Dido," smiled the doctor, "is derived from D 20, Zeus from Zero Energy Uranium System. We are now entering Nero."

"For once a suitable name," remarked Candidus drily. "He destroyed Rome."

Nero was encased in substantial blocks of silver and pale green concrete. Another doctor showed us an attractive diagram of the interior, in a coloured pattern resembling a solitaire board.

"Such pretty designs," said Candidus, "do not deceive me either. In there, in fact, explosions are occurring?"

"Reactions," I corrected.

"When your device reacts," he replied with acerbity, "its victims may not use such polite language."

Warnings beset Candidus on every hand: "Danger. Wet Polish . . . Gloves should be worn when handling natural uranium, and the contact for heavily gloved hands should not exceed ten hours per week . . . Because of the increased Alpha activity avoid at all costs inhaling or taking in U 255 or U 233 through the mouth . . . Is your door locked? Are your windows closed? Are your papers secure? . . . *Ne pas stationner inutilement devant ce colis* . . . Contamination Area. Overshoes and Overalls must be worn."

Overalled and overshod, we entered the Area. Here a series of white-coated gentlemen stood in front of a series of glass cases, called glove-boxes, plunging rubber-gloved hands into them, or rods fitted with claws, and there playing with various apparatus, and tidying away radioactive waste into long plastic bags.

Near by, through a door marked DANGER: ACTIVE, a masked man darted out, crouching beneath the weight of a cylinder, then vanishing hurriedly



through an Emergency Exit. Leaving the Area we passed doors marked, respectively, "Scientists Change. Females Change." Behind these, scientists and females were stripping off layers of perhaps contaminated costume. A machine, marked "If alarm rings, re-wash hands and feet," pronounced Candidus's hands to be clean radially-speaking, while a scintillation counter declared his clothes free of dust hazard, and a geiger counter grumbled at his luminous wrist-watch.

Later at luncheon, at refectory tables in the waitress-served dining-room, with contemporary textiles, and Picassos on the walls, Candidus for once ate heartily, his eyes otherwise occupied than with the hazards of the food.

"Your scientists," he remarked as he looked around him at the lunchers, "are not on the whole handsome. Nor are they very well-dressed. But they seem to have a taste for voluptuous serving-girls." Continuing, he remarked more ironically: "They certainly seem to be making considerable progress towards the destruction of humanity. The bombs, of course, are concealed."

"Not in this Establishment," I interrupted.

"But I was impressed by the deadliness of their radio isotopes, displayed in that cobalt room and distributed so slyly on station platforms. They are well advanced, for example, towards the sterilization of man—"

"Of foods," I corrected. "And stuffs."

"—by means of these gamma rays. Also in inhibiting the growth of potatoes and onions, in infecting milk, in inducing blindness, and in encouraging brain tumours."

"Localizing brain tumours. Sterilizing milk—"

"I should like to have seen more of their experiments with mice—doubtless turning men into mice."

"Mice into other mice. It is time for our train back to London."

When we reached home Candidus went straight to his bedroom, where he stripped to the skin. Then he took a long bath. Emerging, he said: "You should, I think, wash all my clothes in person. I have, of course, not run the bath out. You will doubtless arrange for the effluent to be drained into the Thames. I am now going out for a little to dispose of my wrist-watch."

Returning home in the evening, with an anxious expression, he said "The glass of my spectacles seems to be turning blue."

"I do not notice it."

"Irradiation, I fear. I have, moreover, a headache and a tendency to dizziness, with vomiting."

"Doubtless," I said mischievously, "a touch of atomic influenza. You had better get to bed, and I shall dose you with an isotope."



## In the City

### Reduction of the Franchise

**Q**UITE suddenly the volume of criticism aimed at non-voting shares in general has funnelled into a storm of abuse levelled at the Stock Exchange in particular.

Last week the Council of the London Stock Exchange said that it does not "look with favour" on the voteless equity share, but that the "high-powered sanction" of refusing a quotation to non-voting shares was not considered justifiable. In other words the Council agrees with the critics but refuses to take any action in support of their strictures.

What is all the fuss about? Ordinary shares or equities, by their very nature, are risk-bearing investments. A company's success or failure is (or should be) reflected in the size of its profits and dividends and in the price of its shares on the market. And because the ordinary shareholder accepts the risks inseparable from private enterprise it has always—until now—been accepted as canonical that he should be entitled to some control over management by the exercise of his voting rights.

It used to be that every ordinary shareholder had the vote, and that every preference shareholder became enfranchised when his dividend (an agreed percentage on his investment) happened to be in arrears. There were a few shares without voting rights, a few with special voting rights, but by and large every investment in a public company carried with it the right to share in overall control.

Since the war all that has changed. For a variety of reasons—some of them logical enough—the practice has grown of doling out bonuses in the form of free ordinary shares, often known as "A" shares, which while ranking for dividend exactly like ordinary Ordinary shares do not carry voting rights of any description.

The wiser birds in the City have never liked these undemocratic offshoots of capitalist enterprise, and they have not hesitated to say so, but until

now there has been no strong and concerted action to reform the Companies Act (which permits the issue of non-voting shares) or to induce the Stock Exchange to redraft its regulations.

To some extent the new furore has been sponsored by political considerations. The Labour Party has recently declared its intention, if returned to power, of making the Government an active dabbler in equities; and reading between the lines of this policy statement it becomes fairly obvious that such dabbling would be considered merely a preliminary skirmish to a wholesale attack on the Stock Exchange. The City feels, therefore, that not a moment should be lost in preparing its defences and that the abolition of the non-voting share would constitute a lively act of moral rearmament.

The non-voting share came into existence, of course, because the vast

majority of private investors have neither the time nor the inclination and know-how to use voting powers intelligently. Industry and commercial units have become so vast and multi-lateral that their affairs are beyond the comprehension of all but the specialist. Small private investors, it seems, couldn't care less whether they have votes or not; but the institutional investors—the insurance companies, trusts, pension fund administrators, and so on—are large enough to care deeply, and it is these bodies which are leading the attack on the non-voting share.

It is a good sign that some companies—British Home Stores is one—have decided to bow to the storm and enfranchise their "A" class shareholders. It would be an even better sign of the health of private enterprise if the Stock Exchange Council showed that it has the courage of its convictions.

MAMMON



## In the Country

### The Parable of the Vineyard

**W**HILE agriculture is subsidized and protected by guaranteed prices, horticulture is left without prop or support. If the farmer is feather-bedded, the market gardener can be said to lie like a fakir.

And lack of government interest isn't his worst difficulty. To begin with, a gardener can be said to produce in spite of nature. He wages a perpetual and expensive war against every kind of pest, fungus and blight. Insecticides cut his profits; and when he does manage to get his produce to market he gets only a pittance for his efforts. It is extremely profitable to own a vegetable shop; it is an act of charity or philanthropy to grow vegetables.

The reason why there are a certain number of market gardeners still, is that they know they couldn't sell their business even if they tried. Take Mr. Fitch, for instance: he started as a gardener at a big country house in Cornwall. When the owners sold out to a prep. school, Fitch bought the gardens

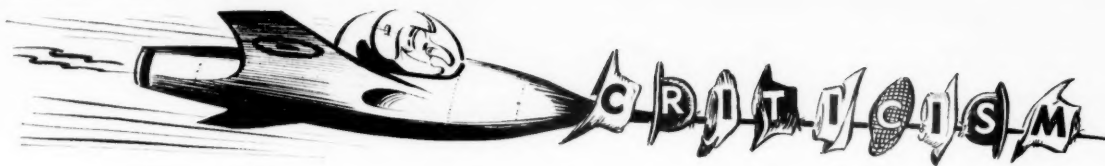
and the greenhouses. He sank all his savings in his business and employed one man to help him.

His gardens flourished horticulturally, for Fitch was a good gardener; but financially they did anything but thrive. After the owner had paid £8 a week to his assistant he was left with only about £5 a week for himself. There's nothing unusual in that proportion in horticulture. Many an employer gets less than his labourer's wage.

However, the real disadvantage of ownership wasn't revealed to Mr. Fitch until last year when he decided to retire owing to the fact that when you're sixty-eight and suffering from arthritis market gardening can be more than arduous. Fitch gave his assistant notice and put his gardens up for sale by auction. He expected to make a small capital profit. His employee, of course, promptly went on the dole and, by doing a couple of days' work a week, was able to maintain his previous income. Fitch, on the other hand, as an owner of a business, found that he himself could get neither unemployment benefit nor the retirement pension, despite paying into these schemes all his life. His garden received no bid at the auction. Consequently he has to go on hoeing it or see his capital engulfed in weeds.

Of a consequence I now eat more cucumbers than Lady Bracknell; while Fitch, meditating on the strikes at Covent Garden, rightly concludes "Fools grow what wise men merely carry."

RONALD DUNCAN



## BOOKING OFFICE

## Honi Soit Qui Malaparte

**The Volga Rises in Europe.** Curzio Malaparte. Alvin Redman, 16s.

THE recent death of Curzio Malaparte removes from the contemporary scene a figure perhaps not very estimable, but undoubtedly of some brilliance. He was the sort of writer who makes his appeal at a level not specially popular in this country—flamboyant, ruthless, full of ideas that demand knowledge of Europe and European literature—so that he had always a greater name on the Continent. He was essentially a journalist and indulged sometimes in vulgarities and sentimentalities, but these failings, often not immediately obvious, take in him invariably an original form. *Kaputt*—although one may hesitate to believe a single word of it—has claims, so it seems to me, to be considered the most striking book to emerge from the second world war.

"Malaparte" is, of course, a pseudonym—a play upon the name of Bonaparte. He was born in Tuscany, Curzio Suckert, in 1898, of Austrian, Russian and Italian descent. After serving as a boy of sixteen, a volunteer, in the French army in 1914 he transferred to the Italian forces when Italy came into the war. Afterwards there was a short spell in the diplomatic service which he left for journalism. He was one of the bright young men who supplied that revolutionary intellectual background against which, almost fortuitously, Mussolini climbed to power.

Violence was to be the order of the day; bare legs and the stiletto instead of silk stockings and guide books. After all, we had to take much of the same kind of thing ourselves from D. H. Lawrence and others; and the Italian variety could at least claim a Renaissance pedigree.

Malaparte had written several books advocating behaviour of this kind when in 1931, from France, he published his most famous work, *The Technique of the Coup d'Etat*. These essays examine the manner in which the cumbersome machinery of the modern state makes it

possible for a small body of desperate men to seize power. It was immediately banned in Italy. When the Axis came into being, Hitler, who had been unkindly handled in its pages (one of the chapters is called "Hitler: a woman"), demanded his revenge; so when he returned to his native country Malaparte was sent to the Lipari Islands for five years.

Mussolini ordered an inquiry to take place as to whether Malaparte's origins were Jewish (which was not the case),



because—according to Malaparte himself—of his friendship with an historical scholar who had discovered that The Council of Ten at Verona had employed a Jewish secret agent called "Mussolini." There was some agitation in the foreign press at the detention of such a well-known writer; and to show how strong and healthy he was in spite of imprisonment the Fascist authorities had him photographed holding a huge piece of pumice stone above his head.

When Italy joined the war in 1940, Malaparte was sent as a newspaper correspondent to the Eastern Front. *Kaputt* is the highly dramatized version of his experiences there, largely presented through such mediums, for example, as (alleged) conversations with Prince Eugene of Sweden, or a dinner party at Warsaw with the Nazi bosses governing Poland. *The Volga Rises in*

*Europe*, the book under review, consists substantially of articles he sent back to the *Corriere della Sera* during this period. Decidedly communistic in tone, they can certainly claim to have foreseen the outcome of the Russo-German conflict.

In a preface written in 1951, Malaparte denies that he writes here with a pro-Soviet bias, stating that he followed merely a line of thought he had been developing for years before. One may suspect, however, that he was gambling—adventurously enough—on communism being the right horse to back. His writings are those of a man drunk with the idea of power: fascism, communism; even at times religion attracts him from the "power" angle.

When Italy collapsed Malaparte became Italian liaison officer with the American forces. *The Skin* (not for the squeamish) is an account of this experience. It is in the manner of *Kaputt* but, in spite of entertaining passages, lacks *Kaputt's* drive and highly talented descriptive powers. *The Volga Rises in Europe* should be read by Malaparte fans, though somewhat less sensational than the books mentioned above.

I have met several persons who had dealings with Malaparte. All of them disapproved of him strongly. A Greek diplomat told me that in the early part of the war Malaparte was sent by Mussolini as a stool-pigeon to reassure Greece as to Italian intentions. Malaparte spoke to my informant with deep feeling of blitzed London, saying it would be particularly tragic if "Lock's hat-shop" was hit by a bomb. Italy, he said, had no designs whatever on Greece. Three days later the Italian army invaded. There must be some doubt as to whether he was a very nice man; all the same he is a very readable writer.

ANTHONY POWELL

## Sleepers, Awake

**Branch Lines.** O. S. Nock. Batsford, 25/-

Among the many subjects on which railway enthusiasts write poetically, few give rise to more lyrical nostalgia than branch lines. Mr. Nock writes with



"To-night the professor is going to talk about 'The Peaceful Uses of Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles.'"

authority and affection, and he does not allow the British Transport Commission's closing-down policy to embitter his spirit.

Mr. Nock points out that, while many branch lines were designed for only local requirements, others were originally part of ambitious schemes. Such, for example, was the line that leads to the junction of Three Cocks in the Welsh Marches, described sixty years ago as the platform "where border people meet old friends, who perhaps they would never meet otherwise, and there they catch colds they would not otherwise catch." Every lover of branch lines will find something to inform or surprise him, such as the information that the legend Berks and Hants Line, still on the indicator boards at Westbury, refers to the line taken over when a new route was made to avoid Bristol, or the astonishing news that the Oxford to Bletchley branch line was the scene, in Victorian times, of some high-powered speeding. V. G. P.

#### The Mendleman Fire. Wolf Mankowitz. André Deutsch, 12/6

Mr. Mankowitz's literary personality resembles that of Mr. Johnnie Ray in another sphere: his is a small wistful voice over-amplified by synthetic means until it pulses like an enlarged heart, ready to break into loud sobs at any moment. His characters cry frequently, to indicate the simplicity and goodness buried beneath the brassy hyperbolic front; and a burst of lachrymosity is allowed to spoil the ending of the title-piece, which otherwise has a genuinely poignant quality. Some affinity with Saroyan emerges in the group of tales concerned with the author's ancestral

Russian village and his pipe-making great-grandfather, who was apparently responsible for the death of a drunken impious cobbler (perhaps this was the story initially printed in something called *The Complete Imbiber*). These stories come as a welcome relief from the world of shady dealers and sharp opportunists, where even a mistress is an investment; selling pictures—as distinct from painting them—is "really work"; and the cost of everything—including taxi-fares—is itemized *ad nauseam*.

J. M. R.

#### Gazooka. Gwyn Thomas. Gollancz, 13/6

This collection contains twelve short stories and a short novel based on the radio play, *Gazooka*. Gwyn Thomas's extraordinary fertility of jokes and verbal felicities embellishes, but never hides, his knowledge of people and the hardness of his compassion. Though his capering Welsh eccentrics know poverty and industrial accident, he shows them wildly planning self-improvement or carnivals or acts of preposterously complex kindness. One or two of these stories are tragic; but the effect is made simply by having passages bald of jokes where the bleak hillside shows through. In the best sense of the term he is a subversive writer.

Occasionally the richness slows down reading; but he is, in any case, a writer to read slowly, not merely because of the danger of missing some of the wonderful detail but because the pattern is varied and it is sometimes rather easy to miss it. One wants to quote and quote but I will restrain myself and mention only his *not juste* for Sherlock Holmes's hat—multilateral.

R. G. G. P.

#### The Life of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Gardner B. Taplin. Murray, 42/-

A further four hundred and twenty-four pages of the Barrett-Browning story: is this possible? Evidently so, if linked to "grants-in-aid" and similar American stimulants, such as access to many letters hitherto unpublished, a pocket diary for 1823-26 and much marginalia, all of which have encouraged and enabled Professor Taplin to produce a final definitive life of Elizabeth.

Expansive in its documentation, this gargantuan "cover" story has an impressive solemnity which, oddly enough, succeeds in being attractive in spite of the biographer's rather emphatic hero-worship. The author of *Aurora Leigh* and *Sonnets from the Portuguese* was surely not entirely pleasant, and the legendary horror of Papa Barrett was, to some extent, initiated by Miss Barrett's obsessive concentration with that father-and-daughter relationship. New facts presented in this volume suggest that papa was not wholly to blame. Although Professor Taplin is a cautious scholar a certain stress on money matters throughout shows Browning very much as a man

who lived off his wife with exemplary exuberance, which is perhaps not what the Professor intended but which does add to the reader's enjoyment. K. B.

## AT THE BALLET

Royal Swedish Ballet  
(EDINBURGH FESTIVAL)



ON its first appearance in these islands the Royal Swedish Ballet has met with difficulties so numerous and disconcerting that a fair appraisal of its capabilities is scarcely possible. No one concerned seems to have been warned of the inadequacies of the stage of the Empire—an antiquated variety house—for presentation of ballet and particularly the elaborate work which was awaited with the keenest interest.

*Cupid Out of His Humour* was performed last year for the entertainment of our Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, during their State visit to Sweden, at the Court theatre of Drottningholm built in the eighteenth century by King Gustave III. Mary Skeaping, for several years *maitresse de ballet* of the Sadler's Wells Company and now director of the Royal Swedish Ballet, had adapted a libretto first used to delight an earlier queen—the celebrated Christina of Sweden—in 1649. By way of loyal gesture to Her Britannic Majesty Miss Skeaping had married the seventeenth-century ballet to music by our own Henry Purcell. With dancing technique of the seventeenth century and costumes magnificent and authentic, and with many of the tricky stage effects beloved of the eighteenth-century playgoer the whole work was set in a décor which should have given it the stamp of a lively and exquisite museum piece.

Alas! in Edinburgh so many things went wrong with such painfully ludicrous effect that it was difficult to reject recollections of the Marx Brothers' *Night at the Opera*. Some members of the audience apparently accepted such vagaries as clouds descending completely to obscure the dancers, and others that carried deities out of sight except for their feet, as festive essays in the fashionable surrealist humour. It says much for all concerned that in spite of these and other sad mishaps, to say nothing of the consequences of there having been no time for rehearsal, it was possible to follow with quickening interest the unfolding, in baroque style of masque-like ballet, the tale of Diana's quarrel with Cupid and the intervention of Venus and Jupiter.

Here was ballet grown sedate after excesses of acrobatic grotesquerie and before Noverre had transformed the art. It has an aristocratic charm in modern eyes but is essentially a period exhibit which at times seems addressed more to the ballet historian than to the balletomane. Miss Skeaping had earlier shown *Giselle* in its original, 1841, full length,

with the part of Hilarion restored in its entirety and other cuts in music and characterization made good to the tune of twenty minutes.

A modern work, *Sisyphus*, to highly-assertive music of the hard-boiled school, by Karlbirger Blomdahl, seemed curiously old-fashioned in its central-European earthiness. I found the story enacted so cryptically that I failed even to identify the characters. If it possessed any vestiges of the wanton and absurd flavour of the ancient fable they eluded me.

The outstanding success of the week's season has been *Miss Julie*, based by Birgit Cullberg, a choreographer of the Fokine tradition, on Strindberg's play. In this Elsa Marianne von Rosen (who had been an enchanting Venus in the *Cupid* ballet) gave a powerfully dramatic performance as the seductress whose overtures to her father's butler end in tragedy. Apart from the general question of the suitability of sordid themes for an art essentially lyrical and romantic, there is no doubt about *Miss Julie's* suitability for the talents of the Swedish Company. The tense atmosphere was subtly created and sustained. As the lover-below-stairs Willy Sandberg was extraordinarily convincing; indeed the whole cast, thanks to choreography at once economical and expressive, made dance seem for once the natural vehicle of communication and emotion.

A glimpse of the classical prowess of the company was afforded by *Grand Pas Classique Hongrois* in which Mariane Orlando and Caj Selling danced with a distinction which seemed inborn. It was tantalizing not to see more of it and regrettable that there is no present prospect of a season in London.

Though the Swedish Ballet can trace its history for more than three hundred years it is oddly lacking in a recognizable national style, the result, no doubt, of strong fluctuating influences from directors of French, Italian, Russian and English background but none Swedish. Fokine and Tudor have left their mark most impressively and now it seems to be Miss Skeaping's task to foster homogeneity and distinctive style in a company of many talents. C. B. MORTLOCK



## AT THE FESTIVAL

*The Ages of Man*

(FREEMASON'S HALL.)

*The Flowers o' Edinburgh*

(GATEWAY THEATRE)

*The Queen and the Welshman*

(ST. MARY'S HALL.)

*Man of Distinction*

(ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE)

*The Empty Chair* (UNIVERSITY THEATRE)

A POTENT anaesthetic against the bludgeoning decoration of the Freemasons' Hall and the ingenious cruelty of its chairs, Sir John Gielgud gave us the keenest pleasure of the Festival in his single matinee of solo

readings and recitations from Shakespeare. Without flourish, wearing a blue suit, he came down the low stage to a lectern which he was largely to ignore, and after telling us how he hoped to show why Shakespeare had meant so much to him, went into action. He divided his programme into the three ages of man; sometimes he prefaced an item with a few words of introduction, sometimes there was only the merest pause between an impassioned declamation and the unruffled beauty of a sonnet.

Never are we likely to hear the sonnets spoken more nobly, with more exquisite feeling or more complete grace. It was worth going to Edinburgh to listen to "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" given us as freshly as if new-minted. In the simplicity of Sir John's delivery one often forgot he was an actor, until the reminder of his eloquent hands; but occasionally he let himself be seized by the power of the verse, and then, eyes half-shut, one could imagine him in costume. In Leontes' "Too hot, too hot!" particularly.

From a lovely fragment, Lear's "And my poor fool is hanged!" he ranged to Richard II's long speeches of abdication. Among a number of pieces that stirred an afternoon audience to laughter the most surprising was Hotspur's "My liege, I did deny no prisoners." What

I think I shall remember longest from a programme far too good for a single hearing were "Angels and ministers of grace" and "To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow." London will be unlucky if this rare treat is denied it.

An Edinburgh company, the Gateway, fully justified its inclusion in the Festival with a comedy by Robert McLellan which can at least be mentioned in the same breath with Sheridan. *The Flowers o' Edinburgh* mocks the affectations of ambitious Scots who rushed to anglicize their accents and manners after the '45; to us Sassenachs this is a new comic idea, and it is worked out wittily, with a pleasing elegance of pattern. Admittedly for most of the first act the Scots was so thick that we had to turn to an interpreter, but either it thinned down or we learned quickly. Good situations follow one another naturally, in the course of which London ceases to dazzle the hero and he emerges to our satisfaction as a young man who will go far, but not south. At all points the play is most commendably handled, not only by Lennox Milne, Duncan Macrae, Tom Fleming and Bryden Murdoch; but the performance that delighted me beyond critical moderation is the zany manservant of Walter Carr, who seems to have slipped every disc in his body, and whose face, writhing palely in disapproval,



[The Flowers o' Edinburgh]

Jock Carmichael—WALTER CARR

supplies an extraordinary silent chorus. The producer was James Gibson.

The next-best production I saw was on "the fringe," *The Queen and the Welshman*, done by the New Drama Group. A gentle historical play by Rosemary Anne Sisson, it describes the happiness and undoing of Queen Katherine and Owen Tudor. Gentle, even a little solemn, but admirably avoiding fustian both in language and background. The issues are clear-cut, and presented with a minimum of characters; Hilary Liddell and Edward Woodward catch the imagination as they show us the dilemma of lovers who were to be so important for England and whose marriage was only possible so long as it could be kept secret from the court. Other critics have mentioned *Richard of Bordeaux*, and though that was considerably better it gives a pointer to the feeling and development of this play. It needs more humour, and could dispense with some rather whimsy folk-songs, but it does insist on our interest. Villiers, the French prisoner who joins as a friend in the retreat at Hatfield, and the Duke of Gloucester are both well taken, by Jack Rodney and Edward Burnham, the latter a sympathetic producer.

Back inside the Festival, an anonymous translation of Walter Hasenclever's *Man of Distinction* soon announced itself a very slim little jest indeed, which in spite of such dexterous padding as Moira Shearer dancing the Black Bottom and a revolving fairground set suggesting *La Ronde* was clearly only good for one act. Although German, from the 'twenties and bringing their deplorable clothes to everyone except Anton Walbrook (whose tailor had boldly jumped thirty years), it is faintly Anouilh until its invention grows slower and heavier. Mr. Walbrook is a professional lover with a profitable clientèle of despairing ladies, who falls for the improbable daughter of a tycoon, and manages, against all the odds, to marry her. I imagine the play has been a good deal toned down for Edinburgh, and may have suffered in the process; the dialogue is neat, but long before the end of the evening the elastic is terribly stretched, for all the high spirits of Denis Carey's production. It is the kind of fantasy that needs refuelling in the air, and the charms of Miss Shearer and Mr. Walbrook, the loyal efforts of a medium cast and even the comic virtuosity of Aubrey Richards—very funny in a small part—were not enough to fill out so slender an idea.

On "the fringe" again, the Edinburgh University Dramatic Society fell short of its usual standard in a difficult play, Peter Ustinov's *The Empty Chair*. This takes us into the inner councils of the French Revolution at the moment when the Terror was recoiling on the men who began it. There are some fine round Ustinov speeches, full of point and irony, but wind is there as well, and too much by-play by dreadfully comic charwomen. The blend of politics and Mrs. Mop is beyond this company, though Alexander Grant gives a good account of Danton, and Patrick Brooks and Derek Pugh are reasonably at home with Saint-Just and Robespierre. No knitting.

ERIC KEOWN

## AT THE PLAY

*A Lonesome Road* (ARTS)

**H**ONOUR Mr. Philip King and Mr. Robin Maugham for the one important step they have taken forward from the other homosexual plays that keep popping up at the club theatres these days. This time there are no misunderstandings or false accusations; Martin Smith and Jimmie Holden, the famous playwright and the vicar's son, are homosexuals, and the problem is not how they shall clear their names but how they are to come to terms with a society in which people of their kind exist only as a persecuted minority.

Unfortunately the authors have illustrated their theme in a play of measureless banality. It is as if Mr. King had reached into his less serious past, pulled out a discarded piece of repertory-fodder (complete with comic charwoman) and sat down with Mr. Maugham to turn one of the little girls into a little boy. The plot concerns an innocent, but naturally highly suspect, friendship between a man of letters who recently served a sentence for an "unnatural offence" and a boy just sacked from school for the same reason; and it was fascinating to stand in the saloon bar of the Cranbourne during the intervals and hear the audience telling one another with deadly accuracy how it was to be developed in the next act.

The palely melodramatic treatment of the theme naturally made it hard to consider the authors' plea seriously. If they believed that by aiming their arguments at the *Sailor Beware* public they were assuring them of wider consideration, they were surely mistaken; leaving aside the frustrating influence of the Lord Chamberlain, it seems to me that the whole point of a play like *Sailor Beware* is that it raises no problems of any kind, and the only possible point of a play like *A Lonesome Road* is that it does.

The cast found it pretty hard to breathe any life into their parts, though there were moments in the last act when Kenneth Edwards as the vicar and Anna Barry as his daughter seemed to find a



*Lia Compass*—MOIRA SHEARER

*Hugo Mobius*—ANTON WALBROOK

[*Man of Distinction*

brief flash of conviction in what they were doing.

### Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Don't miss the new revue *Share My Lettuce* (Lyric, Hammersmith—21/8/57), which is gay, fresh and young; or *At the Drop of a Hat* (Fortune—16/1/57), which goes on undimmed. And see *The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* (New—8/5/57) which is something new in the London theatre. For the rest, it's the old favourites still. B. A. YOUNG

## AT THE PICTURES

*Man of a Thousand Faces*  
*The Abominable Snowman*

NOTHING that involved James Cagney could fail to be interesting, but *Man of a Thousand Faces* (Director: Joseph Pevney) suffers from the handicap of all biographical pictures about celebrated Hollywood figures, and Mr. Cagney has a hard job to carry it. True, of late years we have been allowed to know that some of these idols had their less than laudable moments, and we do see that this one, Lon Chaney, could sometimes be a very difficult man to live with; but the radiance that goes with death and fame in the profession of film acting suffuses this story as much as it did any of the others, and it can be very wearing.

The film begins after its subject's death in 1930 with a reverent speech, on a memorial occasion, by a young man (Robert J. Evans) playing the part of the producer Irving Thalberg; this leads in, by way of a little off-screen narration, to the story of Chaney's youth, and then the film follows his career back again to that point.

One trouble is that career in itself. The sort of thing he was known for belongs by its very nature to the days when the average commercial film appealed, and set out to appeal, to the simplest kind of audience, the audience that was impressed and moved by the sort of unsophisticated, popular, sensational effect provided by pulp fiction or, for that matter, the circus. Fewer, far fewer people these days would be particularly struck by the idea of a "man of a thousand faces"; far more than ever before are beginning to appreciate the skill of actors who can convincingly present a large number of different characters while still using very much the same face. In the film there is no attempt to minimize Chaney's reliance on physical, tangible make-up, from dark skin-stain to artificially-distorting body-harness, and indeed his make-up box is an important prop, used in the death-bed climax when he hands it over to his son. Let's face it, disguises of that kind, however numerous and diverse, are not likely to fill with wonder people who can understand and enjoy things like *The Bachelor Party*.



[*Man of a Thousand Faces*]

Lon Chaney, 1957—JAMES CAGNEY

Lon Chaney, 1930—LON CHANEY

But this, of course, does not account for the whole of Chaney's power, and the best of the picture is in the scenes that show what was possibly the most important influence in developing his real dramatic ability—the fact that his beloved parents were deaf and dumb, so that he grew up (in a happy household with normal brothers and sisters) accustomed to sign-language and mime. These, and the entertaining reproduction of the way silent films and the earliest sound films were made in Hollywood, and the energetic, kindling personality of Mr. Cagney, are what make the thing more worth seeing than the average biographical "tribute."

It was a bit of luck for *The Abominable Snowman* (Director: Val Guest) that the press show arranged for the Warners' next film was put off because of the continued success of *The Prince and the Showgirl*. *The Abominable Snowman* was among last week's releases and would have been press-shown before, if at all; I feel pretty sure they wouldn't have put it on for us if they hadn't had to find something in a hurry. Simple, unpretentious and apparently inexpensively made as it is, I thought it good, and I'm glad to recommend it.

The story is a straight account of a Himalayan expedition which is joined by an English scientist (Peter Cushing) before he discovers that its American leader (Forrest Tucker) is after a Snowman only to profit by exhibiting it in a show. Occult overtones are provided by an infinitely wise Lhama (Arnold Marle) at the mountain monastery from which they set out; and it emerges that

the mysterious creatures are even more infinitely wise, and easily defeat the expedition—not by violence but by inducing most of the members of it to destroy each other.

This is a really intelligent piece of science fiction, not crudely thrilling but continuously full of interest and entertainment because of the writing (Nigel Kneale) and direction. The tensions round the table when the Americans first arrive at the monastery, the way significant effects are made by unobtrusive movements and tiny hints and hesitations in the dialogue, the use of music in establishing and sustaining atmosphere—this sort of thing is immensely more important than violent action or strangeness of scene.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Without yet having seen it (I shall be away), I would suggest *An Affair to Remember* as a promising new one. Also in London: *The Story of Esther Costello* (28/8/57), the very funny *Operation Mad Ball* (28/8/57), *End as a Man* (7/8/57), *The Prince and the Showgirl* (10/7/57), *Around the World in Eighty Days* (17/7/57), and *Mitsou* (see "Survey," 28/8/57).

The only new release reviewed at length here is *Across the Bridge* (14/8/57), from Graham Greene's story, with an impressive performance by Rod Steiger. *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral* is a good Western, and *These Dangerous Years*, built round the singing of Frankie Vaughan, enables him to act too.

RICHARD MALLETT

## ON THE AIR

## Radio Show-down

NEXT month steam radio gets its new look. In April the B.B.C. announced sweeping changes in its general policy, in the organization of its three services and in the time to be devoted to the Third Programme, and for four months a large number of worried high-brows have been trying to get the Corporation to change its mind and its plans.

Much of the criticism levelled against the new look has emanated from the Sound Broadcasting Society (formerly the Third Programme Defence Society), and the society's pamphlet *Unsound Broadcasting* gives a fair summary of the arguments that have buzzed through the correspondence columns of the "quality" newspapers during the summer. Briefly its views and proposals (rejected by the B.B.C.) are as follows:

That the Light and Home services "should retain all the substantial music, drama and talks at present contained within the full range of their planning."

That an extension of Light Programme time constitutes an attack on Home Service standards and is unnecessary and pernicious.

That the Third should run for four hours daily, from 8 p.m. to midnight.

That there should be no reduction in the staff or budget of the Third Programme.

That the new Network Three should operate experimentally for a year, and then ("if it fails to attain listening figures and a status comparable with that of the Third Programme") should be replaced by extensions to the legitimate Third.

It seems odd that a society espousing



## Steam-Radio Relay

the cause of minorities should seek to measure the success of Network Three by its "listening figures." It seems odder that a body defending the rights of underprivileged listeners should condemn the B.B.C.'s policy with the remark that "Not a single individual or organization of any standing in the community has yet supported it." The trouble with the Third so far has been its sycophantic wooing of people of lofty intellectual standing and its almost total neglect of the struggling middle brow. It has not, in my view, done more than preach to the converted and provide an expensive nation-wide (but largely empty) forum for groups that would be happier and just as useful in small back rooms.

"Network Three" could mean a new start for the Third. The B.B.C. press statement of April 8 said that "much of the B.B.C.'s work in the sphere of Further Education will be carried out on this network. Time will be found too for

Nothing that happens to sound broadcasting will halt the tremendous popular thrust of TV, for an appeal to the ear alone cannot possibly compete with the blandishments of *son et lumière* in harmony. Television itself needs a Network Three—but *not* a Third Programme—urgently: and it is the B.B.C.'s job to provide it.

I believe that the new policy makes a reasonable integration of sound and television broadcasting more feasible. I should like to see the Home and Light fused into a service devoted entirely to light music and news, Network Three or the Third (call it what you will) dealing in serious music and talks for the larger minorities, Channel One funnelling off all the light entertainment and popular drama, and Channel X, the Third of TV, experimenting like mad in a medium of brilliant possibilities.

But we must wait and see.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



DOUGLAS

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